

A Brief

DEFENSE

OF

Episcopal Ordination.

IN WHICH

- I. The Arguments for it are propos'd.
- II. The Pleas, for the Right of Presbyters to Ordain, are examin'd.
- III. The Pleas, alleged for the same Right in the Laity, are consider'd.

To which are added

A Reply to the Introduction to the Second Part :
And a Postscript relating to the Third Part of
Mr. Calamy's Defense of Moderate Non-confor-
mity.

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L O N D O N :

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A Bird

DEFENSE

TO

Report of the Commission



3 Mar

To the Editor

It is with great pleasure that I have been able to send you the second part of the report of the Commission on the subject of the British Museum. The report is a most valuable contribution to the history and administration of the Museum, and I am sure that it will be of great interest to you.

Yours faithfully,
The Secretary

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TO THE
READER.

THE following Treatise in
Defense of Episcopal Or-
dination, had long before this
been published, had not Indisposi-
tion, and unavoidable Interruptions
prevented it. Such as it is,
I hope it will be acceptable to all
who sincerely desire that Truth a-
lone may prevail: and that it may
be so, I am sure I have used my
utmost Endeavours to render it as
inoffensive, and as void of all Per-
sonal Matters as any one can ex-

P R E F A C E.

pect such a Debate to be. To this I have added, a Reply to the Introduction to the Second Part of the Defense of Moderate Non-conformity, because that touched even the Lawfulness of Conformity to the Established Church; and was esteemed by many Non-conformists an unanswerable Vindication of their Proceedings. I hope I am now come to an End of my part in this Controversy, in which every body may see I have done more than what I was oblig'd to do in the Course of it; and have refus'd no Pains, to set it in as clear a light as I could. I have nothing more to add, but solemnly to assure the Reader, that in the whole

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whole of what I have written in this Cause, I have had no design either upon our Dissenting Brethren, on the one hand, but that of convincing their Judgments by such sober, and calm Reasonings as appear'd to me too just and reasonable to be neglected; or upon the Church of England, on the other hand, but that of defending its Cause upon such Principles as alone appear'd to me sufficient to establish, and maintain it against the Reasonings of those who have separated from it. These Designs I hope are pardonable, should they be found to be joined with many Mistakes: and if these Mistakes, or any Mismanagement of mine do but

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but excite the Zeal of some Abler Pen to do justice to that Cause which I am said by some to have injured; I shall think all the pains I have taken well recompensed by such an Event, joined with the Satisfaction I have within, that it hath been my sincere Design, in what I have written, to promote Peace, Unity, and Charity.

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ERRA-

C O N T E N T S

A
Revised Edition of the Second
Part of the Church's Discipline of Mo-
rality

E R R A T A.

PAge 17. Line 3. for *had* read *hath*. p. 18. l. 21. for *your* r. *our*.
 lb. l. 23. for *Tou* r. *We*. p. 78. l. 25. dele *then*. p. 106 l. 28.
 for *were* r. *are*. p. 108. l. 15. for *their* r. *this*. p. 118. l. ult. for
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sing add *them*. p. 224. l. 10. for *him* r. *them*. p. 239. l. ult. after
is add *so*. p. 258. the last word, for *ther* r. *found*. p. 265. l. 26. r.
a Person. p. 268. l. 11. after *Persons* set an *Interrogation*. p. 294. l.
 9. after *is* set a *Comma*. p. 330. l. 18. dele *may*. p. 363. l. 23. for
fallious r. *facetious*. p. 386. l. 4. r. *such an one*. ib. l. 5. r. *do in*.

B
Revised Edition of the First Part of the Church's Discipline of Mo-
rality

I R A

A Brief

DEFENSE OF Episcopal Ordination.

Introduction:

THE Design of the following *Treatise* is to set the Matter of *Episcopal Ordination* in its due light. And because in these later Ages of the Church there have been Contests rais'd, and these prosecuted even to this Day, concerning the proper *Ministers* of *Ordination*; some pleading in behalf of *Presbyters*, others in behalf of the *Laity*, for the same Right which is claim'd by *Bishops*, the best Method I can think of to pursue this Design in, is,

I. To

A brief Defense of

I. To propose the Arguments for *Episcopal Ordination*: that so we may judge on what it is the *Claim of Bishops* to the Power of *Ordination* is founded.

II. To examine the *Pleas* that are still alleged for the *Right of Presbyters* to *ordain*: that so it may be judg'd by *all* whether their *Claims* have any just Foundation; and be seriously consider'd by *themselves* whether they ought to be continu'd.

III. To consider what hath been lately advanced in favour of the *Lairy's Right* to appoint, and *ordain Ecclesiastical Officers* in the *Christian Church*:

C H A P. I.

The Arguments for Episcopal Ordination propos'd.

TH E first thing I have undertaken to do, is to propose the Arguments for *Episcopal Ordination*; that so we may judge on what it is the *Claim of Bishops* to the Power of *Ordination* is founded.

Sect.

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Chap. I.

Sect. 1. *Argument the first, taken from Prescription, and the lawfulness of the thing it self.*

First, Bishops have a long, and immemorial Possession of the Power of Ordination to plead for themselves; and with this the Confession of the greatest Patrons of the Presbyterian Cause, that such a Confinement of this Power to them, is in it self lawful. The most Learned of them have never been able to produce any positive Proof of any time in the Christian Church, since the Apostles Days, when it was esteem'd the Office of every Minister of the Gospel to ordain others to the Ministry; or when this Office was not acknowledg'd by all who speak any thing of it, to belong to single Persons superior to the ordinary Presbyters. The utmost they pretend to is to conjecture the time when this Power was first so appropriated. The improbability of their Conjecture I shall have occasion hereafter to consider. But this it self fixeth it so as to leave Bishops in the possession of this Power for above 1550 Years last past. By this means they have all the Right which Prescription can possibly give: And this hath always been esteem'd to give a Right in all Cases lawful in themselves, so far, as that it hath never been

B 2

thought

Chap. I. thought reasonable or just to alienate what *Prescription* hath thus confirm'd; nor have any After-claims been ever thought valid in such Cases. So that the Bishops may well claim a Power which they think belongs to them by *Apostolical Institution*; and which their very *Adversaries* acknowledge them to have been lawfully possess'd of for so long a space of time. I only just mention this *Argument*, and so proceed to others, from which it will appear that they have not only such a *Right* as *Prescription* can give; but that their Claim stands upon a better Foundation.

Sect. 2. *Argument the Second*, taken from the Instances of Ordination recorded in the *New Testament*.

Secondly, It may be alleg'd in favour of *Episcopal Ordination*, that there is no instance, in the *New Testament*, of Ordination perform'd by *Presbyters*; or, at least, without some *Church-Officers* superior to *Presbyters*. For the Proof of this I must refer the Reader to the next Chapter, in which I shall examine all the Instances produc'd out of *Scripture* in favour of *Presbyterian Ordination*, and shew that no such *Right* in *Presbyters* to ordain, as is of late Years claim'd, can be concluded from any of them. And what I doubt not to prove is, That there

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there is no Example of *Ordination* alleg'd in Chap. I. their behalf, in which we find not some *Ecclesiastical Officer* acting, superior to the ordinary *Teachers* of those Days. And the least that can be infer'd from hence is this, That it is more agreeable to the Instances of *Ordination* recorded in the *New Testament*, that it should never be perform'd without the Direction and Hands of some *Ecclesiastical Ministers* superior to the ordinary *Presbyters* and *Teachers* of later Ages, than that it should be perform'd by mere *Presbyters*, without any such superior *Officer*. Thus the *Scripture-Instances* of *Ordination* will be found at last on the side of such a Confinement of the Power of *Ordination* as we plead for; and very contrary to the Method practis'd by our *Dissenting Brethren*.

Sect. 3. *Argument the Third*, taken from the *Rules*, concerning *Ordination*, in the *New Testament*.

Thirdly, It may be farther alleg'd from *Scripture*, in favour of *Episcopal Ordination*, that there are no Precepts recorded there, as given in order to direct any in the point of *Ordination*, but what are given to Persons superior to the *Presbyters*, and ordinary *Teachers* of those Days. In the next *Chapter* I propose very evidently to shew,

Chap. I. That the Power of *Ordination* is not either express'd, or imply'd, in any of those *Rules* or *Directions* given to *Presbyters* in the *New Testament*, which are produc'd to this Purpose. And here it is sufficient to observe, That the only *Rules* extant in the *New Testament*, in which the business of *Ordination* is expressly mention'd, are directed to *Timothy* and *Titus*, two Persons, who by the Confession of all, were superior in *Order* to the *Presbyters*, or *Teachers*. This is, indeed, a very remarkable thing, that when there were *Presbyters* already settled at *Ephesus* and in *Crete*; and such as were without doubt as fit to manage the business of *Ordination* as any in later Ages: That *St. Paul*, I say, should not think fit to intrust this Affair with them, and their *Presbyteries*, but should devolve it wholly upon *Timothy*, and *Titus*; and instead of sending his *Directions* to the *Teachers* already in those Places, should appoint these two to this Office, without the least mention of any such *Right* in those *Teachers*, as they must have had according to some modern Reasonings. From this Argument the least that can be concluded is this, that it was *St. Paul's* Judgment that at that time and in those Places, *Ordination* should be put into the Hands of Persons superior to *Presbyters*, and not left to their Management. From whence it must follow like-

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Chap. I.

likewise that this Judgment was the same with respect to all *Presbyters* and all Places, unless it can be shewn that there was any thing peculiar with respect to the *Presbyters* of *Ephesus* and *Crete*, to determine him to except them, and to deal otherwise with them than he did with other *Presbyters*. And this Consideration ought to be of more weight, because the *Epistles* to *Timothy*, and *Titus*, are the only Records in which we find his Will plainly express'd concerning the first Ordination of *Presbyters*, and *Teachers* properly so call'd; and yet nothing in them, as if he thought of any *Right* in *Presbyters* to ordain others, but on the contrary, all his *Rules* directed to *superior Church-Officers*. It is of small Importance, whether *Timothy* and *Titus* were fix'd *Bishops*, properly so call'd, or not. Perhaps at the first Plantation of *Churches* there was no such necessity of fix'd *Bishops* as was found afterwards; or perhaps at first the Superintendency of such Persons as *Timothy* and *Titus* was thought requisite in many different Churches, as their several Needs requir'd. If so, their Office certainly was the same in all Churches to which they went; and Ordination a Work reserv'd to such as they were, Persons superior to the settled *Presbyters*. But as to *Ephesus*, and *Crete*, it is ma-

Chap. I. nifest that *Timothy* and *Titus* were to stay with the Churches there, as long as their Presence was not more wanted at other Places: And besides, if they did leave these Churches, there was as good reason that they should return to them to perform the same Office of *Ordination* when there was again Occasion, as there was at first, why they should be sent by *St. Paul* to that purpose. Nor is there the least Footstep in all Antiquity, as far as it hath yet appear'd, of any attempt in the *Presbyters* of *Ephesus* or *Crete*, to take to themselves the Offices appropriated, in the foremention'd *Epistles*, to a superior Order of Men. So then, we have this Argument from Scripture in favour of *Episcopal Ordination*, that the only *Canons* and *Prescriptions* recorded there, concerning the *Ordination* of *Presbyters*, are directed to *Persons* superior to these *Presbyters*, to be executed by Them only, as far as appears.

Sect. 4. Argument the Fourth, taken from Apostolical Institution.

Fourthly, It may in the last place be alleg'd in favour of *Episcopal Ordination*, that the *Apostles* left the Power of Ordaining *Presbyters* in the Hands of fix'd *Bishops*. The main point here to be prov'd is, That *Episcopacy*

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pany is of *Apostolical Institution*. For if it be Chap. I.
shewn that *Bishops* were settled in the
Churches of *Christ* by them, I believe it will
be easily granted that so considerable a Bu-
siness as that of *Ordination* was so far confin'd
to them, by the Will of the *Apostles*, as that
it should never be perform'd without their In-
spection and their Hands: The most strenu-
ous *Advocates* of the contrary Cause not seem-
ing to doubt that this *Confinement* was of
Apostolical Institution, if it can be shewn that
the *Order* it self was so. Now this being a
Matter of Fact, past many Ages ago, the
only method by which we can come to the
Knowledge of it, is the *Testimony* of *Writers*
who liv'd in *that*, and the following Ages.
And there is the more Reason to rely upon
their Testimony in this Case, because this is
a Matter of a simple, uncompounded Nature,
perfectly within their Knowledge; not stand-
ing in need of any curious niceness of Learn-
ing, or Reasoning, but level to all Capacities;
a Matter in which they might very easily
have been contradicted, had they represented
it falsely; and a Matter in which they could
not in the first Ages be byass'd by Interest.
And here (waving the Argument from the
Angels of the particular *Churches* mention'd
in the *Revelations*, which certainly were sin-
gle Persons who had the Care of those
Churches and their *Teachers*, in a particular
manner

Chap. I. manner intrusted to them in the Days of *St. John*, and this with *his* Approbation at least: Waving this) I think I may say, that we have as Universal, and as Unanimous a Testimony of all Writers, and Historians from the *Apostles* Days, as could reasonably be expected, or desired: Every one who speaks of the Government of the Church in any place, witnessing that *Episcopacy* was the settled Form; and every one who hath occasion to speak of the Original of it, tracing it up to the *Apostles* Days, and fixing it upon their Decree; and what is very remarkable, no one contradicting this, either of the Friends or Enemies to Christianity, either of the *Orthodox*, or *Heretical*, thro' those Ages, in which only such Assertions concerning this *Matter of Fact* could well be disprov'd. The *Testimonies* on this Subject are so many, and have been so often produc'd by learned Men that I shall not here Transcribe them: Nor can this be thought any blameable Omission in this *Controversy*, because I believe it impossible to cite any thing to this purpose which is not already to be found in many *Authors* of great Reputation, and easily to be met with; and, which is more material because the *Patrons* of the *Presbyterian* Cause do not deny this, but seem to acknowledge that there are many, and plain Testimonies to this purpose in the *Antient Church-Writers*. From which

Testi

Episcopal Ordination.

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Chap. I.

Testimonies I cannot but think it highly reason-
able to infer, that *Episcopacy* was of *Apostolical*
Institution. Were there only *Testimonies* to be
produc'd, that this was the *Government* of
the *Church* in all Ages, it would be but rea-
sonable to conclude it of *Apostolical Institu-*
tion; it being so highly improbable that so
material a Point should be establish'd with-
out their Advice or Decree, when we find the
Churches consulting them upon every occasi-
on, and upon Matters not of greater Import-
ance than this. But when we find the same
Persons witnessing not only that the Govern-
ment of the *Church* was *Episcopal*, but that it
was of *Apostolical Institution*, and deliver'd
down from the beginning as such, this adds
weight to the Matter, and makes it more un-
doubted. So that here are two Points to
which they bear Witness, that this was the
Government of the *Church* in their Days,
and that it was of *Apostolical Institution*. And
in these there is such a *Constancy*, and *Unani-*
mity, that even St. *Jerome* himself (who was
born near 250 Years after the *Apostles*, and is
the chief Person in all that time whom the
Presbyterians cite for any Purpose of theirs)
traces up *Episcopacy* to the very *Apostles*, and
makes it of their Institution; and in the very
place where he most exalts *Presbyters*, he ex-
pects *Ordination* as a Work always peculiar
to

Chap. I. *to Bishops.* Add to this, that there is such Evidence for *Episcopacy* in the earliest Days, that Mr. Baxter (who yet was very zealous for the Cause of *Presbyters*) could not but own thus much at least, that there were six'd *Bishops* in some Churches in the Days of one of the *Apostles*; that neither the *Apostles*, nor any one of their *Disciples*, nor any *Christian*, or *Heretick* in the World, spake, or wrote a Word against *Episcopacy*, till long after it was generally settled in the Churches. Which I cannot but think a great Argument for the *Apostolical Institution* of it in all Churches: It being highly improbable that in their Life-time it should be settled in any without their Order, there being no Reason imaginable, why they should not make the same Order for all Churches as occasion offer'd; there being no positive Testimony amongst the Antients of any Church in which it was not settled; all Writers speaking of it as universally the same; and it being hardly to be thought that such a Constitution should be settled in one Church, much less in great numbers, without a great deal of Notice taken of it, and a great many Complaints made of it, had it not been known to be an *Institution* of the *Apostles*.

So that supposing there be nothing in the *New Testament* concerning the *Superiority* of *Bishops* to *Presbyters*; and nothing of any *Confinement* of the Power of *Ordination* to

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Chap. I.

such that *superior Order*; yet there may be sufficient Evidence of *Apostolical Institution* from these Testimonies. And if there be sufficient Evidence of this, by what means soever it come to us, it ought to be received. Now that *this* ought to be accounted sufficient Evidence by our *Brethren* in this Case, is plain from their receiving the same Testimonies in another most important Point, which is not, and could not be plainly settled in the *Scriptures* themselves. For it is upon the *Testimonies* of antient *Writers* in all Ages, that *They*, as well as *We*, believe the Books of the *New Testament* to have been extant from the *Apostles* days; and to have been written by the *Apostles*, or by Persons approved of by them. And this indeed makes me the more solicitous to establish the Credibility of this Testimony of the *Antient Church* concerning *Episcopacy*, because I fear the *Objections* with great Zeal advanced against it, by a late *Author*, will be found at last to have a very bad influence upon all *Historical Certainty*, and to reach, farther than they were designed, to the prejudice of what is of the last importance to the *Christian Church*.

Now there being two *Methods* in which the *Adversaries* of *Episcopacy* have endeavoured to avoid the force of this *Argument*; first by attempting to invalidate the Sufficiency and Credibility of this *Testimony*, even supposing it universal

Chap. I. fal and constant; and *secondly* by confronting and opposing to this concurrent Testimony, and the Conclusion we build upon it, several modern *Hypotheses* and *Schemes*; I shall follow them in *both* these *Methods*, as far as my present Subject obliges me; and,

I. I shall endeavour to establish the *Sufficiency* and *Credibility* of the concurrent *Testimony* of those *Antient Writers* which are now remaining, concerning *Episcopacy*.

II. I shall consider the principal *Schemes* and *Hypotheses* which have been confronted and opposed to this *Testimony*, and to the *Conclusion* we build upon it.

I. As to the *former* of these; the only thing necessary for the establishing the *Sufficiency* and *Credibility* of this *Testimony*, being to remove the *Objections* which have been made against it; this I shall endeavour to do by following the Steps of a *late Author*, who hath discovered a more than ordinary Zeal against this *Testimony*; and amass'd together all that can be said against it.

Def. of
Moder.
Nonconf.
P. I.
p. 134.

Obj. I. The *first Objection* I meet with, is this, *that the Church of England follows not the antient Church in many instances of Doctrine, Discipline, and Ceremony*: And from

from hence it is argued that it is *unreasonable* Chap. D
to lay so great a stress upon the Fathers, in one
case whom we neglect, or acknowledge to be de-
ceived, in many other Points.

The Answer to this is easy and evident. In
Matters which depended upon their judg-
ment, and reasoning, we think our selves per-
fectly at liberty to determine whether they
were in the Right, or not : And so in some of
these Cases we do not imitate them because
we think they judged amiss in them ; in others
we are hinder'd by some accidental Circum-
stances of these latter times, from resembling
them. But supposing we do not imitate them
in all, doth it therefore follow that we do
not well to imitate them in any ? And sup-
pose we cannot or do not retain some things,
which some few of them represent as found-
ed upon *Apostolical Tradition*, doth it therefore
follow that we ought not in reason to retain
what their *Universal Testimony* conveys down
to us as instituted by the *Apostles* ? But the
point now before us is this, whether it be not
reasonable to believe that the *Apostles* institu-
ted *Episcopacy*, upon the constant, and *Uni-
versal Testimony* of *antient Writers* ? And if
this Author can shew that there is any other
as plain a matter of Fact delivered down to
us by the same Witnesses, which we do not
believe upon their *Testimony* ; I grant this
would

Chap. I. would be a great Advantage over us, and we might well be required either to receive, or reject their *Testimony* in both *Cases*. But it cannot be just Reasoning to argue that we follow them not in points of Judgment, therefore we ought not to receive their *Testimony* in plain Matters of Fact; that we imitate them not in many Practices which they founded upon *Apostolical Institution*, therefore we cannot reasonably believe upon their *Testimony* that any particular Matter was of *Apostolical Institution*. It may as well be argu'd that we do not follow the *Antients* in all Things, and therefore cannot reasonably rely upon their *Testimony* concerning the *Canonical Books* of the *New Testament*. *Historical Certainty* must be banish'd out of the World if such kind of *Arguments* be once admitted; and we must come to that degree of *Scepticism* as to believe no *Matters of fact*, but what we see with our own Eyes. I cannot therefore but wonder to find the fore-cited *Author* triumphing in such an Argument as this, as if it were the Judgment, and Opinion of the *Fathers* we depended on in the *Case of Episcopacy*: Whereas it is only their universal *Testimony* concerning a *Matter of fact*. If he will but answer to himself, How he can reasonably receive the *Canonical Books* of the *New Testament* upon their *Testimony*, whose *Opinions* and *Practices* he doth not follow

follow in many Cases; the Answer will be Chap. I.
a sufficient Reply to this Objection, which
he had so largely, and triumphantly urg'd
against the *Episcopal Divines*.

Obj. 2. *It is not easie to discover the true and P. 144.*
real Sense of the Fathers in this Debate about
Ordination: And on this account the Argument
drawn from them must be very uncertain. Now We
speak not concerning their Opinion in any
Controversy, but about their Testimony con-
cerning a plain Matter of Fact: In which
Case it will appear very easy to discover
their true, and real Sense, notwithstanding the
Reasons here given to the contrary.

The first Reason is, Because several of the
earliest Writers have been lost, as Papias, and
Hegesippus, in whom we might have found Ac-
counts of the Church contrary to those now ex-
tant. But

1. Our Debate is, whether it be not rea-
sonable to receive the Testimony of those
Writers who remain, concerning a Matter of
Fact: And it is strangely unaccountable to
urge against this, not any contrary Testimony
extant, but a mere Supposition that some-
thing contrary to this might have been ex-
tant at first, tho' now wholly lost, and the
very Memory of it extinguished.

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2. What

2. What shall become of the Testimony of all *Historians* at this rate, if this once be admitted as an Argument? For it may be said in any Case, tho' hitherto never so uncontested, that perhaps there were once extant Histories contrary to these, tho' Time and the Malice of Men have devour'd them, as we know they have numberless others.

3. It is a melancholy Consideration what an Influence such Arguments as this may have upon sacred Matters. How easily may the *Deists* at this rate argue against the *Gospel-History*, that perhaps in the first Days there were Accounts publish'd concerning our *Blessed Saviour* by good Hands directly contrary to those in the Gospels now extant, tho' they be entirely lost, as many Books of the *Adversaries* of Christianity are known to be? And how easily may they argue against the Reasonableness of your receiving the Books of the *New Testament* upon the Testimony of the *Fathers*; that you know not what they all thought; that many of them are lost, who perhaps contradicted the Testimony of the remaining part? Would it not be a sufficient Reply to such Persons, that nothing can be more unreasonable than to reject the concurrent Testimony of all or most of the Writers extant, upon so groundless a Supposition as this: Nay, that

that it is more reasonable to think that the *Writers* not extant bore Witness to the same Things; and that if they believe any thing upon the Testimony of past Writers, they ought in reason to believe this, because the same Surmizes lie against all *Historians*?

4. How unreasonable is it for the same Person to object the bare Possibility of a contrary Testimony in the lost Writings of *Papias*, and yet to blame a great Man for depending, in another Case, upon the Testimony of *Papias*, as it is extant in *Eusebius*, and to declare him to be a *Writer* of a low Credit, as he doth, page 171?

5. It is highly probable that were the Writings lost now extant, we should find Testimonies to the same purpose with those now extant: and extremely unreasonable to suppose the contrary. As for the Works of *Papias* and *Hegesippus*; *Eusebius* and many other Writers now extant without doubt saw, and perused them; but found nothing against *Episcopacy* in them, as far as appears. *St. Jerome* when he is most of all exalting the *Presbyters*, neither denies *Episcopacy* to be of *Apostolical Institution*; nor doth he claim *Ordination* as the Right of *Presbyters*; nor doth he appeal to one antient Writer, either then extant, or lost, as giving any Testimony against the *Apostolical Institution* of *Episcopacy*. Besides, in many other Cases we know by

Chap. I. the Writers now extant, that there were Persons who differ'd from them in such, and such Particulars, who were Disapprov'd and Condemn'd. But in this Case we have not the least Intimation either from the Friends of *Episcopacy*, or from those who are accounted by some to have been Enemies to it, that there was any one *early Writer* of the Church, who differ'd from the rest about *Episcopacy*, or the *Institution* of it. And upon less grounds than these I'm sure we often believe, in many Points of *History*.

P. 145. The second Reason given why we cannot easily discover the true Sense of the Fathers, is this, because many of the Writings which go under their Names are Spurious, and Supposititious, either in whole or in part: So that you know not what is theirs, and what is not. But

1. There are Testimonies, sufficient to support the Cause of *Episcopacy*, in those Writings which were never yet doubted to be the Works of those Authors to whom they are ascribed; or which have been demonstrated by the strongest Arguments to be Genuine, to the entire satisfaction of the most Learned, and thinking Part of the World. So that take only those Parts of their Works about the *Genuineness* of which there is no dispute: And in these we find the plainest Testimony

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concerning this point. And what then can Chap. I.
it signify against this *Testimony*, that other
Pieces ascribed to them are *Supposititious* and
Spurious?

2. This *Author* alleges here that some
have father'd supposititious Pieces upon the
Apostles themselves, much more may they
have made bold with the *Fathers*. But doth
it follow that therefore we cannot be certain
that the *Apostles* wrote those Books we re-
ceive in the *Church* as theirs? Doth it fol-
low from thence that there are no Rules to
go by, sufficient to distinguish the *Genuine*
from the *Spurious*? If it do not, in the
Case of the *Apostles*, why should it be al-
leg'd in the *Case* of other *Writers*? But if
this must be pressed in the *Case* of the *Fa-*
thers, let them who urge it consider, whe-
ther they do not put Words into the Mouths
of *Deists*, and *Infidels*, to destroy all certain-
ty about past Matters, which depend upon
Antient Writings. It is not sufficient to say,
that *Almighty God* is obliged in his Provi-
dence to take more Care in one *Case* than
in the other. For it is manifest that he
hath left the Writings, and Names of the
Apostles under the common Fate of other
Writers so far that *Counterfeit*, and *Spurious*
Pieces have been actually father'd upon
them; and Alterations made in their *Text*
by officious Hands. It is his Pleasure to

give sufficient Evidence to what he requires the World to receive: And if he gives in this Case what they accept of in other Cases, he may justly expect these Writings should be received as others are, notwithstanding the like *Objection*. And if it do not follow from hence, that the Writings now received as the Writings of the *Apostles* are not *theirs*; or that there are not Rules sufficiently certain to distinguish the *Genuine* from the *Spurious*: Neither will it follow from the *Suppositiousness*, or *Spuriousness*, of some Works, or some Sentences, in the Books ascribed to the *Fathers*, that others are not *Genuine*; or that there are not very good and just Rules to distinguish the one from the other.

3. To argue from the possibility of contriving a Cheat, so as that it shall not be able to be detected, strikes at all the Writings in the World, Sacred and Profane, as well as those of the *Fathers*; and tends to bring in *Scepticism* with respect to all *Authors* in the Ages before us. The bare possibility of this is no more an Argument against the *Genuineness* of *Ignatius's Epistles*, than it is against *St. Paul's*. But we must discard all Pretenses to *Historical Certainty*, if we do not discard such loose Principles as these. And surely it is but reasonable to receive that as *Genuine* which hath no mark
of

of a *Cheat*, upon it. Nay, were it possible so to contrive a Forgery as that it should not be possible for the Wit of Man to detect it, it is our Duty to receive it. A Cheat so contrived is no Cheat to us: And if we receive any *Writing* as *genuine*, we are oblig'd to receive all which have the same marks of their *Genuineness*. Otherwise we act not agreeably to our Principles, or our Duty. Should we be deceiv'd in the most important Case possible of this Nature, it cannot be suppos'd that God can punish us for following the best light we have after the best manner possible; but that he rather will applaud us for acting by those *Rules* which are the only Measures we have to go by.

4. Could this *Author*, or any one else, produce any Argument against the *Genuineness* of those many *Sentences*, or Passages in the *Fathers*, in which their Testimony concerning *Episcopacy* is contained; this indeed would be something of an Argument against the positive Proof we allege for it, yet of the lesser force, and weight, because there are no Footsteps of any other form of *Government* in the *antient Church*. But I believe it never yet was heard of that any Man should argue against receiving their Testimony, not from the Spuriousness, or Forgery of those parts of the Works ascribed to them, in which this *Testimony* is found, but from the

Spuriousness of some other Works, or Sentences, which have been ascribed to them. What a blow must such Reasonings give to all *Historical Certainty*; and of what sad Consequence, must that be to the whole *Christian Faith*?

5. Some supposititious Pieces have been father'd upon St. *Jerome*. How can they, who argue from hence against the other *Fathers*, be sure that the *Passages* in which *Episcopacy* is thought to be depress'd, are not of the number? Or why do they ever talk of his Opinion in this Matter? According to this Argument it is as reasonable to think that he had no such Opinion, as it is to imagine that the other *Fathers* did not give that Testimony which is ascribed to them.

6. Since some supposititious Pieces, and Sentences, have been father'd upon the *ancient Writers*, why do they appeal to their *Testimony* concerning the *Books* of the *New Testament*? Or, why do they not rather reject it? If it be reasonable notwithstanding this *Objection* to receive their *Testimony* in one Case, why not in another? Their *Testimonies* where they are equally clear, and universal, about several Matters of *Fact*, must stand, and fall together. The more care ought to be taken by those who, I doubt not, are hearty Enemies to the Cause
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of *Scepticism*, not to furnish and support it with such Arguments as these, which must be equally strong in all parallel Cases; and are greedily snatched at by Men inclined to do what prejudice they can to the Cause of *Christianity*, and the *Holy Scriptures*.

The Author whom I am now considering, in order to shew some ground for suspicion of *Forgery* in those Passages of the *Antient Writers* which favour *Episcopacy*, insinuates that the support of the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* might induce Men of After-ages to make Alterations in the Writings of the Fathers. Upon which Account he is so far from wondring to find, among the Remains of Antiquity, so much in favour of Prelacy, that he rather wonders that all Passages in favour of the Primitive Parity, and the Identity of Bishops and Presbyters are not quite expung'd. It is very necessary to give a distinct Reply to this. And

1. Supposing some Persons of later Ages have been so Foolish and Base as to make Alterations in the Works of *Antient Writers*; yet this Author himself believes many Sentences, and many Pages in some of them to be truly *Genuine*: And he himself must acknowledge that it is not a sufficient Reason against the *Genuineness* of any Sentence, that it supports the Opinions, or Practices of many in later Ages, and therefore was probably inserted by them. No, there must be other

Chap. I. other Arguments to prove these Passages spurious besides this, or else it will go very hard with many Texts of Scripture, and with many whole Books in the *Sacred Canon*. For thus the *Deists* may say, It was for the *Interest* of *Christianity* that there should be such *Testimonies* in *Antient Writers* concerning the *Four Gospels*, and their *Authors*: And from hence conclude, that these *Testimonies* were foisted in by modern *Christians*. If it be said that it was as much for the *Interest* of the *Antient Christians*; and therefore very probably these Passages are *Genuine*: It may be replied, that it was as much for the *Interest* of the *Antient* as the more *Modern Christians* to assert *Episcopacy* so far as is implied in the *Testimony* we speak of: For they always without doubt esteemed it their *Interest* to preserve the *Church* as they thought the *Apostles* left it. Thus the *Sosinians* say, It was the prejudice of the *Orthodox* to their own *Opinions*, and their *Interest*; which might induce them to add several Texts, and make several Alterations in the *New Testament*: And they likewise wonder they find no more there in favour of the *Orthodox Doctrine*, considering what liberty some have taken. But we say, this is not sufficient to determine a Passage to be spurious: There must be other Reasons alleged, because at this rate no Passage can be

Genuine

Genuine which favours any of the differing Parties in Religion. 2. I am not now concerned for any *High Flights*, or any *Reasonings* of the *Antients*; but barely their *Testimony* about Matter of Fact, that *Episcopacy* was the *Government* of the Church, and of *Apostolical Institution*. And I deny that there are any *Passages* in the *Antients* so much in favour of the *Primitive Parity*, and *Identity* of *Bishops* and *Priests*, as to contradict, or oppose this in any one plain Sentence. So that if such *Passages* were expunged by Fraud there must have been an universal Conspiracy, to do it so effectually as not to leave the remembrance of any contradiction to this *Testimony* concerning *Episcopacy*: Which it is absurd to suppose. But if there be any such *Passages* left in favour of this *Primitive Parity*, this is an Argument that there was not that prodigious Liberty taken by any in altering the *Writings* of the *Antients*; because it is incredible they would have left any remarkable *Passages* against themselves, when they were once engag'd in such a Work. 3. But perhaps these *Passages*, if there be any such, were forged by *Presbyters* who affected an equality to *Bishops*, and the reason why there are no more in favour of *Episcopacy*, is because the *Enemies* of it took the liberty of expunging multitudes of Sentences to that pur-

Chap. I. purpose out of the Writings of the *Antients*. The *Argument* is equally good both ways, but both ways fallacious, and of dangerous Consequence. 4. Supposing a settled *Episcopacy* instituted by the *Apostles*, not at the first Foundation of *Churches*, but at the latter end of their Days; how could we know this but by *Testimony* of *Antient Writers*? And considering all things, could we well expect a more universal *Testimony*, with less Contradiction, or less Opposition, than we meet with in this? Here, therefore, the Argument from *Forgery* can have no place; because this *Testimony* is just what we must suppose it, had there been no *Forgery*. For according to all reasonable Proceedings in the like *Cases*, that ought to be received as no *Forgery*, which is exactly what we may reasonably suppose it would have been, had there been no *Forgery*. 5. It most effectually puts a stop to such *Insinuations* as this, to observe that there is as little ground to suspect a *Forgery* in these *Testimonies* as is well possible to be imagined. For the *Testimony* we speak of, is not concerning the *Apostolical Institution* of the exorbitant Power claim'd by later *Bishops*, or of any external *Ensigns* of *Worldly Grandeur*, or *Riches* appropriated to them: But merely of the Institution of one Person to *Ordain* and *Govern* *Presbyters*, within such or such a *District*, and

according to the Design and Rules of *Christ-Chap. I*
tianity. Now this supports no *Tyrannical*,
 and *excessive Power* in them: Nor any but
 what carries forward the great ends of Re-
 ligion. So that the inserting of *Passages* to
 this purpose doth not answer the design
 pretended in this Insinuation, of supporting
 the Pretensions and Grandeur of more mo-
 dern *Bishops*: And therefore the Suppositi-
 on of it must be vain and precarious. Had
 there been any Forgery in this *Case*, certainly
 it would have been to purpose: And fre-
 quent Declarations would have been found
 in the *Antients*, more for the exaltation of
 the worldly Grandeur of *Bishops*, than any
 now extant. But in these *Testimonies* as
 they now stand, nothing is to be found
 that is not agreeable to the *Christian Religion*,
 or that can serve the Purposes of any but
 a truly *Christian Episcopacy*. Besides, the
 chief ground of *Forgery*, whenever it was
 practised, was *Party*, and *Contradiction*; and
 a design to confute the Opinions of Oppo-
 sers by supposititious Passages. Now we do
 not read of any *Contradiction* to this Testi-
 mony concerning *Episcopacy*, of which we
 speak; or any *Party* against it: Nothing
 considerable, granting the whole of what is
 produced to this purpose. All *Churches* and
Christians, as far as we know, seem to
 have been agreed in this point, amidst all
 their

Chap. I. their other differences, as universally as can well be imagined. But thus much may suffice in answer to the foregoing *Insinuation*.

Page 150. The *third* Reason given why we cannot easily arrive to the true Sense of the *Fathers*, is their *Obscurity*, and the *vehement*, and *hyperbolical Expressions* they often made use of.

1. I grant this to be of force with respect to many of their Opinions, and Notions: Yet even here there are *Rules*, and *Circumstances* to determine us often to their true Sense. But what is this to their Testimony concerning Matter of Fact? Can there be any suspicion of *Rhetoric*, and *Figure*, in their declaring *Episcopacy* to be the Government of the Church, instituted by the *Apostles*; or in their running up *Catalogues* of *Bishops* to the *Apostle's* Days; or in recording the Names of particular Persons made *Bishops* by the *Apostles*?

2. It is an easie matter to see where any *Authors* speak as *Historians*; and where as *Rhetoricians*. Supposing any of the *antient Church-Writers* to deduce unreasonable consequences from the *Apostolical Institution* of *Episcopacy*; or to exceed in *Rhetorical Flights* upon that subject: We do not build our Belief upon these Flights and Reasonings, but upon their plain *Testimony* concerning

Episcopal Ordination.

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erning Matter of Fact: Supposing the *Acts Chap. I*
of the Council of Chalcedon call the Emperor's
Letters *Θεία γράμματα*, in a Passage which
may be easily understood to relate to them:
Doth it follow from hence that when the
Fathers speak so of the *Holy Scriptures*, they
mean to give them no higher Authority
than they gave those *Letters*? Doth it fol-
low from hence that when they ascribe par-
ticular *Epistles* to particular *Apostles*, they
speak *Rhetorically* likewise? And must all
their *Testimony* about the *Canon* of the *New*
Testament fall to the ground because in other
cases they sometimes speak *obscurely*, and
sometimes *figuratively*?

3. This *Argument* will affect the *Apostoli-
cal Writings* themselves, in which there are
obscure, and very *hyperbolical Expressions*. But
this never was thought to prove it hard to
find out their meaning in Passages which
are not *obscure*, or *figurative*. Nay, cer-
tainly their true Sense hath been found out
by many considering Persons in those very
places, which have been thought very *ob-
scure* and *figurative*. This *Author* can tell us
himself that there are *Circumstances*, and
Rules to guide us to the true meaning of
the *Fathers* in many of their highest Flights.
And what then signifies all this Discourse
about their manner of Writing?

4. The

Chap. I.

4. The only thing that could have served his purpose, would have been to have shewn that the *Passages*, upon which we build our Belief of the *Apostolical Institution of Episcopacy*, are either so *obscure*, or so *figurative*, that we cannot build any such Matter upon them: But of what importance can it be, to shew that other *Passages* are *obscure*, and *figurative*, upon which we build nothing in this cause?

5. Supposing that the *Fathers*, in opposing their *Adversaries*, as others of the best of Men have too often done, were apt to run from one extreme to another, and to carry things to the height in such opposition, this can signify very little to their *Testimonies* concerning *Episcopacy*. For when they say that it was the *Government* of the Church in their Days, and *instituted* by the *Apostles*, they cannot be supposed to speak *Rhetorically*, or to carry things to an undue extremity, because otherwise there is nothing, no not their *Testimony* about the Writings of the *Apostles*, but what may be said to be given in heat, and carried to that extremity only in opposition to some *Adversaries*. And in the case of *Episcopacy*, it is a very material Consideration that we know of no *Adversaries* they had to tempt them to run to any *extremity*; none that denied it to have been always the *Government* of the Church

and

and instituted by the *Apostles*; unless the *Chap. I.*
mere Supposition of a *Modern Author* at
1600 Years distance, that there were *Christi-*
ans even in *Ignatius's* Age who look'd up-
on *Episcopacy* as unlawful, may pass for an
Authentic Piece of History: An Inimination
which I believe cannot be parallel'd, un-
less it be by the *Discovery* made by o-
ther *Modern Authors*, at the same distance
of time, of an Alteration made, after the
days of the *Apostles*, from *Presbyterian* to *Epis-*
copal Government in the *Church*, concerning
which there is not one Word in any *Antient*
Writer. This is a new way indeed of writing
History from one's own Invention, and not
from any *Records* of past time: And yet we
have seen such mere *Conjectures* as these relied
upon; and others ridiculed for relying upon
the plain *Testimony* of *Antient Writers* concern-
ing the *State* of the *Church* in their own Times.
106. Supposing many very high, and figu-
rative Expressions in the *Epistles* of *Ignatius*;
against which this *Author* doth very ill to
drop his Iniminations, unless he had an-
swer'd those Arguments which have satis-
fied all the learned World concerning their
Genuinenesse; let them be never so much
soften'd, and Interpreted never so favoura-
bly, the least that can follow from them
is, That *Episcopacy* was settled in his Days;
and was at a great heighth, when neither
D worldly

worldly Advantage could make it so; nor was there time from the *Apostles* Deaths for a gradual Increase to such a pitch. For he lived in the *Apostles* Days, and was at farthest, the *second Bishop* of his See: and as much a *Madman* and *Blasphemer* as he may be thought by some, he died a *Martyr* for *Christianity*, and was always highly esteemed in the Church. And it is the most reasonable thing in the World to suppose, that he could not speak of *Episcopacy* as he doth, had he known it to have been only the *Agreement* of *Presbyters* amongst themselves; had he known it to have been an Alteration in the Church from the State in which the *Apostles* left it; as he must have done according to the Conjecture of some *Modern Writers*. And the more highly he magnifies it, still the greater Argument it is, that he knew it to be settled by the *Apostles* in the Churches of *Christ*, and that it was their will, it should be retained, and esteemed. It is impossible he should speak of it as he doth, if he knew it, and all the Church then knew it, to be a voluntary prudential Compact amongst the *Presbyters*. For what could induce him to do it? Or what influence could his high Words have upon those who knew as well as himself that it was just then agreed upon; and had no higher an Original than the

the Consent of *Presbyters*? So that this wholly destroys the strange Supposition before-mention'd: Without which, I believe, a very reasonable Account may be given of his speaking after such a manner of *Bishops* in those Days, and in the Circumstances the Church was then in.

The Fourth Reason why we cannot easily come to know the true Sense of the *Fathers* is this, because some of them in their Commentaries mentioned the Opinion of others as well as their own, without any Distinction: And in their Writing against their Adversaries, some of them used dishonourable Methods. I am indeed almost ashamed to Answer to such Arguments as these. For

1. Can it follow from hence that their Testimonies concerning Matters of Fact in their own Days, are not their own Thoughts? That *Ignatius* and many others whose Testimonies are not in Commentaries, spake not their own Mind in what they say of *Episcopacy*? Or that what they say who use no base Arts against their Adversaries, nay, who had no Adversaries in this point, ought not to be relied upon?

2. Can it follow from hence, that therefore their unexceptionable Testimonies concern-

Chap. I. ing the Canon of the *New Testament*, cannot be relied on? If not, why may not their *Testimonies* likewise concerning *Episcopacy*?

3. If it can be shewn that the particular *Testimonies* on which we rely in these *Cases*, are not plainly their own *Thoughts*, but the *Notions* of others; or that they knew the contrary to what they *witnessed* in these *Points*: This indeed would be to the purpose. But it is absurd to allege against these *Testimonies*, that *other Passages* are not their own *Thoughts*; or that some *other Persons* were not always fair *Disputants*; or that some of the *Persons* who give these *Testimonies* did not always, in *other Points*, maintain their own *Opinions* after the most honourable manner.

Page 153. The *Fifth Reason* is, because the *Fathers* advanced gradually in *Knowledge*; and they often alter'd their *Minds*; and who knows but that they retracted in this *Matter*, as they did in others?

This indeed is of desperate Consequence with respect to all *Historical Certainty*; that the *universal Testimony* of many *Ages* should be rejected upon such a strange *Supposition*. Who knows but that they retracted their *Testimony* about the *Writings* of the *Apostles*, and *Evangelists*? And what will become

become of the *Holy Scriptures* at this rate, or of all *History*? For who knows but that all the Historians in the World retracted what is now come to us under their Names? And who knows, at last, but that St. *Jerome*, and *Aerius* retracted all that they had said about the Identity of *Bishops*, and *Priests*? This is as much as to say, because they retracted some things, therefore they perhaps retracted all things: Because they retracted some Opinions and Notions, built upon former Reasonings of their own, which they found to be false, therefore they retracted their Testimony concerning a *Matter of Fact*, in which they might be as well satisfied at Forty Years of Age as at Fourscore. This was a Point that depended not upon their Judgment, and Reasoning, only concerning what was in their own Days, or what was transmitted down to them from their Predecessors: And therefore here is not room for the Supposition of an Alteration of their Minds. Nor could this be in any number of them without some notice of it: Nor is there the least ground to suppose it, because we know of none who were of a contrary Opinion in the first Days concerning the Government of the Church. I think those who reason at this rate, may as well go a little farther; and say, *Perhaps* there never were

Chap. I. any such Men as these Fathers; and perhaps we are all in a Dream.

The Sixth Reason is, because it is hard to discover how the Fathers held their Opinions, whether as necessary, or as probable only, &c. But it is evident at first sight that this cannot touch their Testimony about the Books of the New Testament, that they were extant in their Days, and that they were written by the Apostles: Or their Testimony about Episcopacy, that it was the Government of the Church in their Days, and instituted by the Apostles. However they express themselves in many of their Notions, and Opinions; we know that when they say, the Apostles instituted Episcopacy, the Words are not capable of any Sense but one, and cannot be misunderstood.

The Seventh and last Reason is, because we cannot be sure that their Testimony (who are now remaining) was the general Sense of the Church. But this is much the same with the first Reason, which supposes many Writers lost who perhaps contradicted this Testimony: To which I have given a distinct Reply. I shall only add, that there can be no Historical Certainty at this rate: For what shall we do, unless we will depend upon those who are extant; and acquiesce where there

there is no Footstep remaining of any Contradiction from good Hands? For why is it that any *Historians* are depended on, but because they are esteemed as faithful Representatives of the Sense of all those who had opportunity of knowing the Things related? But who knows but that many in their Days contradicted their Relations, tho' we have no account of them? Who knows but that many in the Days of the *Fathers* differ'd from them about the *Canonical Books* of the New Testament? Who knows but that many might oppose them, and not write; or that they may have written, and their Writings have been devoured by time, or suppressed by the contrary Party? And who knows, last of all, but that there were many more good Writings, and Testimonies in favour of *Episcopacy* once extant, and afterwards suppress'd by the supposed Enemies to it? To what a degree of *Incredulity* may we come by such Steps as these? And whither will the love to a particular Cause sometimes carry Men?

Thus have I gone over all the *Reasons* alleged by a late *Author*, to prove that it is not easy to come to a knowledge of the true Sense of the *Antient Church* concerning *Episcopacy*: And have, I hope, said what is sufficient to shew the little force there is in them, in the Case now before us. I proceed now to the next *Objection* against

Chap. I. the Authority of the Fathers in the point of
Episcopacy.

Page 156. Obj. 3. We cannot reasonably depend on the
Report of the antient Church-Writers, in this
Case, because we find them guilty of so many
Mistakes, and so often contradicting one another,
concerning Apostolical Traditions. I answer,

1. They do not contradict one another in
this point: But are as generally agreed, as
it is well possible to imagine, that the Go-
vernment of the Church in their Days was
Episcopal; and that this was of Apostolical
Institution. And I add that their contra-
dicting one another in other Points, is so far
from being an Argument against their Testi-
mony in this Case, that it adds a Strength and
Force to it: It being always esteemed a good
sign of a true Fact, that Persons, who are
very free in contradicting one another in other
Matters, consent and agree in it.

2. Supposing their contradicting one ano-
ther, and their Mistakes in other Points, an
Argument against their Testimony concerning
Episcopacy, it is equally an Argument against
their Testimony concerning the Books of the
New Testament, and the Authors of them.
And those who receive their Testimony in
one Case, notwithstanding this Argument,
ought in justice to receive it in another.

But

Episcopal Ordination.

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But to clear this Point more thoroughly, Chap. I.
which so nearly touches the *Holy Scriptures*
themselves, I observe

3. That there is no *Case* produced by those
who have laboured most to do it, in which
these *antient* Writers were *mistaken*, or con-
tradicted one another, parallel to that Testimo-
ny concerning *Episcopacy* we are now conside-
ring: And consequently none which can af-
fect that point, so as to invalidate their Te-
stimony concerning it, as will appear by
considering particularly every *Instance* alleg-

Papias reported the thousand Years bodily p. 156.
Reign of Christ upon Earth, for an Apostolical
Tradition. But, 1. This might be merely
a Mistake of his Judgment, putting a more
literal Interpretation than was designed up-
on some obscure saying of one of the *Apo-*
stles; or deducing some Consequences of his
own from it: For it is by these means that
a *Doctrine* is more easily misreported, than
a settled, visible Matter of Fact. 2. Here
is no Instance given of any *Testimony* that the
contrary was taught by the *Apostles*: And so,
for ought appears, the *Doctrine* which he
might thus Interpret was truly, as he said,
an *Apostolical Tradition*. Thus many at this
Day think this *Millennial Reign of Christ* an
Apostolical Doctrine: And it is certain that
the Words, upon which they found it, are
Apo-

Chap. I. *Apostolical*. 3. Supposing Papias had born Testimony concerning the *Apostolical Institution* of *Episcopacy*, I cannot see how his Mistake supposing it one, in the other Case can invalidate his Testimony in this: Because that is a Point very capable of Mistake, and very probably mixt with his own Reasoning; and this concerns a plain, settled Matter of Fact, in which there is no room for Reasoning, or for the Mistakes of his own private Judgment. 4. If any think otherwise I think it is but reasonable that only Papias should suffer for the Mistakes of Papias. And therefore supposing him one of the Witnesses for *Episcopacy*; his Mistakes can only invalidate his own Testimony, not the Testimony of others, who in great numbers witness to the same thing. But supposing his Works were now extant, and he should be found to bear witness to the *Apostolical Institution* of another Form of Church-Government, according to the unreasonable Fancy of the Author. I am now considering, the same Author hath here destroyed his whole Credit at one blow, and proved him a most incompetent Witness in any such Case. So that I hope the supposed, lost Testimony of such a Witness will be no longer of any force. But, 5. What signifies it to use Words. Papias is not one of the Writers upon whose Testimony *Episcopacy* relies; and therefore

his

Mistakes can signifie nothing to their Testimony; unless it be a good Argument that one *Historian* ought not to be believed in one particular *Story*, because another *Historian* was mistaken in quite a different Matter.

The next Instance, and that the most famous one, of Mistake, and Contradiction amongst the *Antients* concerning Apostolical traditions and Institutions, is the Controversy about the Observation of Easter: In which *Polycarp* pleaded that St. *John* was for *Papian* the time, and *Anicetus*, that St. *Peter* was for another. And indeed this is a sad Instance of the Proneness of the best of Men, to set with an ungoverned Zeal, and to come to Extremity against one another. But I propose not what Argument can be brought from hence against their Testimony concerning Matter of Fact. For 1. It doth not appear but that both these Persons were in the Right, as to Fact. It is well known that it was the constant custom of the *Apostles*, in all indifferent Matters, to comply very much with the Humours and Customs of the Place where they resided: Which makes it very highly probable that *Polycarp* might have known St. *John* for one time at one Place, and *Anicetus* St. *Peter* for another time, for different Reasons, at another Place. This is agreeable to their Practice in all other like Cases:

Chap. I. Cases: And therefore here is no *Mistake*, or *Contradiction* concerning *Fact*. 2 All the *Mistake* here is in point of *Judgment*; arising from their not considering the prudential *Maxims* by which the *Apostles* guided their *Practice*. The very *Apostle* who had appeared zealous for one time at one Place would without all doubt have been as zealous for another time, at another place, where the *Circumstances* of things were different. But these Men, not considering this, were so weak as to think, that in so indifferent a matter as this, all *Christians* in all places ought to comply with what each of them knew to have an *Apostles* Example on it's side, and this only at one certain place, and amongst one particular sort of People. Now this *Error* of *Judgment* in them, (tho' much to be lamented because it was pursued to the great Scandal of *Christianity*;) can never prove them incompetent *Witnesses* concerning plain *Matter of Fact*, unless it be required that all *Witnesses* about *Facts* be infallible in their *Judgment* and *Reasonings*. 3. Supposing that *Polycarp* and *Anicetus*, were Persons, on whose *Testimony*, amongst others, we depended concerning the *Apostolical Institution* of *Episcopacy*, the difference, contradiction, and heat which was between them concerning the *Observation* of *Easter*, will be so far from invalidating their *consenting Testimony* in another matter
tha

hat it will mightily strengthen it: as it is
 generally thought that the consent of two Per-
 sons in *one* thing, whom a sharp Dispute about
another Matter of thelike nature hath irritated
 against one another, is of more weight, than
 the consent of two Friends: It being usual
 for such Persons, to contradict one another
 out of prejudice, and in order to shew
 that their Adversary is liable to Mistakes
 in *other* Points, as well as in that concern-
 ing which their former Contest had been.
 But these are not the Persons on whose
Testimony we rely in the Cause of *Episcopacy*:
 And therefore a thousand worse mistakes in
 them will signify nothing to the point; un-
 less it be fair, and just, that the Credit of *one*
 Man should be forfeited by the Misdemean-
 ours of *another*. According to which Prin-
 ciple there cannot be a Person of *Credit* in
 the World. If *Polycarp* have failed in this
 point, let him only suffer for it: And then
 what becomes of the *Negative Argument* drawn
 from his mentioning only two Orders as of
 any regard in the *Church*? Whereas if he
 had positively affirmed them, and them only,
 to have been instituted by the *Apostles*, ac-
 cording to this Argument, no credit had
 been due to him. 5. I cannot dismiss this In-
 stance, before I deduce from it a strong Argu-
 ment in favour of the *Apostolical Institution*
 of *Episcopacy*. It is acknowledged by the most
 learned *Adversaries* of it, that it was univer-
 sally

Chap. I. fully settled before the middle of the second Century, perhaps as early as this famous Controversy about Easter. Now the difficulty is this: If the Churches were constituted, and left by the Apostles in another Form, how can it be supposed that they should so soon all agree to depart from it, and settle another when we find them in so much lesser matters, so tenacious of Apostolical Customs, and Traditions, that they proceeded to the highest extremity against one another for not retaining what each side thought of Apostolical Institution? How can it be supposed that their alteration of the Form of their Church-Government could be made without the least noise or the least notice taken of it by Ecclesiastical Writers, when the endeavouring an alteration in the keeping of Easter, raised such a noise and combustion; and is particularly taken notice of in the Histories of the Church? Such strange Suppositions as these ought to be accounted for, before this instance of the weakness of the Antients be produc'd as an Argument against the Apostolical Institution of Episcopacy.

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Once more, St. Jerome takes a Custom of the Church in his time for an Apostolical Tradition. St. Austin founds another upon Apostolical Tradition: And Epiphanius another. Now, 1. St. Austin's supporting the giving the Communion to Infants upon that general Doctrine

the *Apostles*, that *Communicating* was neces- Chap. 10
ary to Salvation, is manifestly a point of *Judg-*
ment, and *Reasoning*, and therefore toucheth
 not his *Testimony* about Matter of fact. 2. We
 do not argue merely from the *Testimony* of so
 late Writers as these, that *Episcopacy* is of *Apo-*
stolical Institution. We grant it doth not fol-
 low, *St. Jerome* thought so; therefore it is so.
 But Writers of all Ages in the Church, wit-
 ness that this was the *Government* in their
 days; that it was instituted by the *Apostles*,
 and deliver'd down as such. All that we
 produce *St. Jerome* for in this Case, is that it
 was in his time, and that he believ'd it to be
apostolical, and receiv'd it as such: But with-
 out the *Testimony* of the Ages before him, I
 should not esteem this a sufficient Argument
 that it was really so. And the reason why
 I am not obliged to think that *Custom* he calls
apostolical to have been so really, is because
 we have no mention of it in more ancient
 Writers. Were there so much *Testimony*
 that as there is to *Episcopacy*, it ought to be
 believed to be *Apostolical*. So that these *Customs*
 here mentioned are destitute of that early
 and manifold *Testimony*, on which *Episcopa-*
cy depends: And therefore we are at liberty,
 not to believe them *Apostolical*. Could the
 use of *Episcopacy* be proved to be parallel to
 these, or could more early *Testimonies* be pro-
 duced against it, than are produced for it; this
 like-

Chap. I. likewise might be thought no more *Apostolical* than the others. But till that be done these Instances of Mistake, if they be so, can prove nothing against it. 3. If St. Jerome's Testimony be not to be depended on for one *Apostolical Tradition*, why should the least Account of it be made concerning the *Primitive Parity of Bishops and Presbyters*? If He have failed, and this be a just Rule, let Him only suffer for it. If He be of any force in the Cause, it ought to be, as he is a *Witness*, and a *Witness* of *Apostolical Institution*. And how incompetent an one must he be according to this Argument, living at so great a distance from the *Apostles*, and manifestly taking other things for *Apostolical* which were not so? Thus I might argue with those who reason after this manner against *Episcopacy*. That in truth St. Jerome's Testimony is for, and not against the *Apostolical Institution* of it.

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Obj. 4. The Testimony of the Ancient Writers concerning *Episcopacy* cannot reasonably be received, because Ecclesiastical Historians have not given us any plain, and certain Accounts of the first Plantation of Churches, or any true Catalogues of Bishops succeeding one another in them. But, or moved to proceed to the 1. Tho' like

1. Tho' *Eusebius* be the first professed Ec-
clesiastical Historian; yet he is far, in distance
of time, from the first Writers, on whose
Testimony the Cause of *Episcopacy* is founded:
So that what can it signify to allege that
Eusebius, and his *Contemporaries*; or that *Baro-*
nius, and Dr. *Hammond*, cannot furnish out
just, and full Accounts of the *Apostles* Pro-
ceedings; what can this signify, I say, to
that *Testimony* of the *Ages* preceding *Eusebi-*
us, that *Episcopacy* was the Government of the
Church, and of *Apostolical Institution*, on
which we rely?

2. Supposing we cannot have an exact ac-
count of the first Settlement of particular
Churches; of their *Founders*, and of the *Line*
of *Bishops* succeeding in them; this will no
more prove that there were no *Bishops* in
them, than the Disputes, and Differences
about the Succession, and Years of Reign-
ing, of the *Kings* of any Country, will prove
that there were no *Kings* in those Countries.
Nay, this will no more prove that there
were no *Bishops* in those Churches, than
that there were no *Presbyters* in them. For
if this Argument prove any thing, it will
unhappily prove too much; viz. That no
Churches of *Christians* were settled any where.
It being certainly as conclusive to say, *Histo-*
rians are obscure, and uncertain in their Ac-
counts

counts of the Travels of the *Apostles*, and the Settlement of particular *Churches*; therefore there were no *Churches* settled by them, as it is to say, They are very uncertain in their Accounts of the *Succession* of *Bishops* in particular *Churches*, therefore there were none. But what wonder is it that *Historians* at some Hundred Years distance, should not be able to furnish out exact Accounts of the particular Circumstances of these Things? Or what Argument can this be in either of these Cases, when it is so certain from other *Writers* before them, that there were *Churches* planted by the *Apostles*, and *Bishops* settled in these *Churches*. And if, notwithstanding this *Objection* we depend upon the *Testimony* of the more antient *Writers* in the one Case; so likewise may we in the other.

3. The Appeal of the more antient *Writers* (in their Disputes with *Heretical Persons*) to the *Doctrine* of the *Bishops*, whom they affirmed to have succeeded one another from the *Apostles*; and this not contradicted by their very *Adversaries*, but, as far as appears, acknowledg'd by all in those Days when the *Falshood* of it might easily have been detected; This *Appeal*, I say, tho' it do not support the absolute necessity of an uninterrupted *Succession*; yet it proves that in those early Days it was known and believed, without Opposition, or Contradiction, that there

Episcopal Ordination.

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there was such a Succession of Bishops up to the Apostles. And this is a very great Argument for Episcopacy, tho' later Writers have not been able to furnish out compleat Catalogues of Bishops. Chap. I.

4. The same Author who alleges this obscurity of Historians against Episcopacy, saith that Bishop Stillingfleet hath given us good Reason to believe that the Apostles did not take the same method in all Places; i. e. That in some Churches they instituted Episcopacy, and in others not. The truth of this I shall by and by examine. But in the mean while there is this use to be made of this Concession, that notwithstanding the obscurity of Eusebius and others about the Succession of Bishops, it is reasonable to believe that the Apostles instituted Episcopacy in some Churches. From whence I infer, that this Uncertainty concerning the Line of Bishops, is no more an Argument against the Apostolical Institution of Episcopacy in all other Churches, than it is in those Churches in which it is acknowledged to have been settled. Thus have I sufficiently answered this Author's long Discourse about the uncertainty of the Tables of Succession, and shewn that it can have no force in the present Debate, against the Apostolical Institution of Episcopacy. Much less can it signify in this Cause, to expose the peculiar Notions of some modern Learned Men upon

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Chap. I. which no stress is laid, or to break Jest upon any Trifles which have no reference to the Point in hand.

Obj. 5. The Fathers, especially after Constantine's Time, often condemned Men unjustly, and without reason; and therefore their representing Aerius as an Heretick, for questioning the difference between a Bishop and a Presbyter, ought not to weigh with considering Persons. Now,

Our Argument for Episcopacy is not that the Fathers of later Ages condemned those who would level it with Presbytery as Heretics; but that the Fathers and Writers of all Ages bear Testimony to it, as the Government always settled in the Church, and settled by the Apostles. Now this Testimony cannot be weakned by any such Allegation as this.

*2. The only true Reason for rejecting Aeri-
us's Opinion, would be the unreasonableness of it; or the contradiction of it to the Testimony of those who were better judges how the Churches were left by the Apostles, than He: Not that Epiphanius condemns him, which I acknowledge to be no Argument consider'd by it self.*

3. It doth not follow that because the later Fathers often condemned Men unjustly, therefore they always did so: But the Merits of

the

the Cause are to be judged of from other Chap. I.
Reasons.

4. All that I build upon this *Condemnation* of *Aerius*, is that the *Superiority* of *Bishops* over *Presbyters*, was in that Age universally acknowledged; and a contradiction to it, in any sort, a new thing and esteemed of very bad consequence. From whence I infer that they were not, in that Age, the first Witnesses to the original of *Episcopacy*; nor did they think it a *Novel Constitution*; nor could they esteem it less, than as transmitted down to them for an *Apostolical Institution*. But for the whole proof of this we depend likewise upon the *Testimony* of former Ages.

5. This *Testimony* can no more be invalidated by such Reasonings as this than the *universal Testimony* upon which we receive the Books of the *New Testament*. For it may be urged by some after the same manner against that, To find some of the Fathers representing the questioning any of these Books as *Heresy*, will signify little to such as consider how unjustly they often condemned Men as *Heretical*. The Answer is plain, This will shew that such Books were transmitted down to them as *Apostolical*; and the *Testimony* of former Ages joined to this will be of weight, notwithstanding any such *Objection* as this. And the Answer is the same in the other Case as in this.

Thus have I cleared the *Testimony* of the Antient Church-Writers in the Case of *Episcopacy*, from the *Objections* alleged against the force of it. Some of them, I grant, hold strongly against a blind Submission to their *Authority* in Matters of *Reasoning*, and *Judgment*; and some of them against building much upon what may be called *Apostolical* by single Persons amongst the later sort of them. Let us use our own Understandings in Points in which we are capable of judging as well as they. Let us never depend on any of them in Matters of which they are not competent Judges. But let us not under pretence of *Freedom* and *Impartiality*, cast off their universal concurrent *Testimony* about a *Matter of Fact*, of which they are the only proper Judges, lest we destroy all *Historical certainty*, and forfeit the Credit even of the most *Sacred Writings* now extant.

And this *Testimony* standing firm, I may now infer from hence that *Episcopacy* is of *Apostolical Institution*; and likewise that the business of *Ordination* was a peculiar Office of the *Bishops*, by that *Apostolical Institution*. This is but reasonable to suppose, That as *Ordination* in the *Scripture-Times* was not left to the *Presbyters* of *Crete* and *Ephesus*; but *Timothy* and *Titus* were sent with *Commissions* to perform that Office in those Churches; so when the Churches were more universally settled,

settled, and *Bishops* settled in them, a business of such consequence as *Ordination* must have been entrusted to their peculiar *Care*; or at least so confin'd to them as never to be perform'd without their Consent, and their Hands. And this conclusion ought the rather to be allowed, because none of the antient Opposers of *Episcopacy*, as far as appears, denied this. *Aerius*, above 200 Years after the *Apostles*, out of a private Resentment, began to level *Bishops* with *Presbyters*. This he did, not by pretending to allege any authentic Testimonies that the *Apostles* did at their Deaths leave the Government of all Churches, and the *Ordination* of *New Presbyters* in the Hands of *Presbyteries*; but by arguing from some Passages in their *Epistles*, that *Presbyters* were equal to *Bishops* in the first design of the *Apostles*; which passages shall be distinctly considered in the next Chapter. But we never read, I think, that he did expressly pretend to the Right of *Ordination*. And *St. Jerome*, near 300 Years after the *Apostles*, in the place where he most exalts *Presbyters*, expressly yields that *Ordination* is not theirs, but the peculiar Office of the *Bishops*. And for the Modern Adversaries of *Episcopacy*, *Blondel* Apol. p. 157. the greatest of them, thinks it highly reasonable to affirm, that as soon as ever there was a *supereminence* of one over many *Presbyters* in

the Church, (which himself affirms his *Prime-Presbyters* to have had in the Days of some of the *Apostles*;) the Care of the Church, and of *Ordination* particularly, belonged in a peculiar manner to that *one Person*.

But because many things are still alleged against the *Apostolical Institution* of *Episcopal Government* and *Episcopal Ordination*, I shall endeavour, as I proposed, to give farther Satisfaction in this matter,

II. By examining those *Hypotheses*, and *Schemes* of *Learned Modern-Writers* which have been confronted, and opposed to the concurrent *Testimony* of *antient Writers* in favour of *Episcopacy*, and the *Conclusion* we build upon it. And,

First, It is supposed by some that the *Apostles* used different methods in different Churches, and in some instituted *Bishops* superior to *Presbyters*, in others not. And the *Author* I am now considering, seems sometimes to be of this Opinion; tho' at other times, he affirms the *Apostles* to have left all *Presbyters* in an equality. But the unreasonableness of opposing *Episcopacy* with this Conjecture, will appear from the following Considerations.

I. From

1. From hence it appears that the *Testi-* Chap. I.
monies for *Episcopacy* are so many, and so Authentic, that learned Men who have been wholly indifferent to the *Cause* of *Episcopacy*, have thought themselves obliged to own that the *Apostles* instituted it in some *Churches*.

2. Tho' there may, in many other Cases, be good Reasons given for the different Conduct, and Behaviour of the *Apostles*, as in the *Case* of the *Celebration* of *Easter*, and other Points of that indifferent Nature; yet in this *Case* of the Government of the Churches, when once the number of *Christians*, and of *Presbyters* came to be considerable, no Reason can be thought of why their *Orders* and *Institutions* should be different in different Places: And therefore it is not reasonable to suppose it without plain Proof from the *antient Writers*.

3. None of the *Antients*, as far as appears, know any thing of this difference: But all who speak professedly of *Episcopacy*, speak of it as of the *Government* universally settled in all *Churches*, wherever there was a number of *Christians*, and *Presbyters*. Nay, St. *Jerome*, the chief Patron of *Presbyters* amongst the *Antients* positively affirms, that whenever the *Institution* of *Episcopacy* was, it was all over the *Christian* World at the same time; and that before that all *Churches* were alike governed

Chap. I. vernal by *Presbyteries*. So that, as our *Author* not unjustly saith, with respect to Dr. *Hammond's* Notion of two *Bishops* in one Church at the same time, that had there been any such thing, it is impossible that the discovery of it should have been left to the *Moderns*; it may in the same manner be said of this *Conjecture*, that had there been any such variety in the *Apostles* Settlement of different Churches, the discovery of it would not have been left to Persons at 1600 Years distance, but the *antient* Writers must have taken some Notice of so remarkable a thing.

4. The chief Patron of this Opinion is Bishop *Stillingfleet* in his *Irenicum*, p. 325. &c. where he endeavours to shew that in small Churches, where there was no great probability of increase, there was at first only a Pastor settled, with Deacons; and in larger Churches a College of Presbyters to govern by their joint Counsels. As to the former of these Positions; here is nothing alleged to shew, either that these Pastors had any right to ordain others; or that they were not under the Inspection first of the *Apostles*, and such Church-Officers as *Timothy* and *Titus*; and afterwards of fixed Bishops. Make the most of it, this doth not prove in the least against the *Apostolical Institution* of *Episcopacy* where there was a number of *Christians*, and *Presbyters*: Which is all I desire. As to the latter, that learned

Writer

Writer alleges nothing in the Proof of it, a- Chap. I.
gainst the fixed Superiority of *one* Person
during Life over these *Presbyters*, and his par-
ticular Concern in *Ordinations*, and every thing
relating to these *Churches*; and consequently
nothing to prove that these very *Churches*
were without fixed *Bishops*. I am sure, some P. 158
of the *Authors* he quotes for this purpose,
are the most noted *Patrons* amongst the *An-*
tients of the *Episcopal Power*, and only menti-
on these *Colleges* of *Presbyters* as assisting the
Bishop by their *Counsels*, in his *Government* of
the *Church*. But,

5. If it be still supposed that the *Apostles*
instituted only *Presbyters* for the *Government*
of some *Churches*, tho' they might appoint
Bishops in others; how came the former, so ve-
ry soon, and without any Noise, or the least
Disturbance, to be so little fond of *Apostolical*
Institution, as to conform to the model of
the *Episcopal Churches*, and not to insist in the
least upon the Compliance of the *Episcopal*
Churches with them? We see in a lesser mat-
ter, the *Celebration* of *Easter*, they press'd af-
ter *Uniformity*, but yet would not recede one
step from what each side knew to have been
Apostolical Practice in different *Churches*:
And of this Quarrel we have a large ac-
count in *Historians*. Is it credible, there-
fore, that we should have no account of this
Alteration in so material a point as the *Go-*
vernment

Chap. I. *vernment* of the *Churches*; no Disputes raised upon that Head: But a meek Compliance of the *Presbyterian Churches* with the *Episcopal*, and an Alteration of their *Churches*, which they knew to stand upon the same foot of *Apostolical Institution* with the *others*, so silently brought about, that the very Memory of it should be wholly extinct? But of this I shall have occasion to speak again by and by. At present I shall only say, that either there was no such Alteration made in the first Government of the *Churches*; or else that it must have been made entirely upon very apparent Evidence, that it was the *Apostles* Will, that at least all larger *Churches* should comply with the *Episcopal Form* of Government.

6. If the *Apostles* instituted *Episcopacy* in some Churches (as this *Conjecture* grants) I desire to know whether the *Right* and Management of *Ordination*, were not in the *Bishops* of those Churches. Nay, can it be supposed that the ordinary *Teachers* and *Presbyters* in those Churches were designed for that Office by the *Apostles*? And not being designed for it, can it be supposed that there was any thing in the *Commission* given to them, to empower them to perform it? If not, then here were *Presbyters* by *Apostolical Institution* without a *Right* of *Ordination*. Consequently the Arguments alleged for this

Right

Right in *Presbyters* must fall, because they Chap. I.
prove this *Right* to have been in the *Presbyters*
of these *Churches* as strongly as in any others.

Secondly, Some other Learned Men see
such manifest Footsteps in the highest anti-
quity of the supereminency of one Person
in the *Churches*, that they are obliged to
own it: but then they say that at first this
was only a *Prime-Presbyter*, a *President* in
the Meetings of the *Presbyters*, not invested
with any Authority properly so called over
them in their *Cures*, but voluntarily chosen
by them for the better management of their
Assemblies, &c. This hath been said by the
Learned *Blondel*, and others. But I fear
this will be found only an *Evasion*, in order
to avoid his acknowledging such *Bishops* in
the very first years after the *Apostles* as he
confesses to have been universally settled in
less than Forty years after them. For,
1. The *Instances* in *Antiquity* which he ac-
knowledges to prove this, do indeed prove
a great deal more. The *Angels* of the
Churches in the *Revelations*, are Persons to
whom the *Care* of those *Churches* was in a
particular manner committed; and of whom
an Account of the Miscarriages and Defects
in them, is in a particular manner required.
These, He saith, were *Prime-Presbyters*, not
Bishops: tho' it will be hard to give a rea-
son

Chap. I. son, unless He will draw an argument from hence, that all parts of the *Episcopal Office* are not here expressly attributed to them. And it will be hard likewise to shew, how a *Prime-Presbyter*, by being only chosen *President* of the *College of Presbyters* for the more orderly management of their joint-Counsels, should become chargeable with the faults of their *Churches*, with which according to this supposition He had nothing to do. For it is manifest He could be no more accountable for any *Congregation* but his own, than any of the other *Presbyters*, had He not the care of *others* committed to Him in some peculiar manner. And this He could not have, if He were only *Prime-Presbyter* in the *College*. For as such he was only responsible for his own Failings in his Duty in that post: and as for other faults, an account of them should rather have been demanded of those *Presbyters* who were the *Teachers*, and *Governours* of the particular *Congregations*. But if a *Prime-Presbyter* were one whose duty it was to inspect and take care of those *Churches* in which there were *Presbyters* also fixed, as according to *Blondel*, he must have been; then it is evident that this *Prime-Presbyter* was in truth a *Bishop* with Subject *Presbyters* under him. And since he * freely grants that these *Prime-*

* *Apolog.* p. 35. 53. & *Prefat.* p. 6.

Presbyters had this Superintendency over many *Churches* or *Congregations* with their *Presbyters*; and was after such a manner responsible for them; and this by the constitution of the *Apostles*, or their *Disciples* before the death of them all; what is this but to give them the dominion of a *Bishop* over their *Brethren*? and what reason can be given why it should not be acknowledged that *Episcopacy* was settled in the *Churches* in those early days? especially considering that this *Prime-Presbyter* remained in his Office during his Life.

2. As the Instances he produceth for these *Prime-Presbyters* prove very favourable to *Episcopacy*, so those Arguments against the Antiquity of *Bishops* which are deduced from some of the antient Writers not mentioning *Bishops* in some *Churches* as well as *Presbyters* and *Deacons*, hold equally against these *Prime-Presbyters* whom He acknowledgeth to have been at that time in those *Churches*. And this Observation is of more weight, because it is acknowledged that even in *St. John's* days the Office of these *Prime-Presbyters* was of such Consideration, that an account was justly required of them of the Miscarriages in several *Churches* under them. And therefore, since their Eminence was such, it cannot be supposed that *St. Clemens* would any more have pass'd by such an Officer

Chap. I. *Officer* in his *Letter* to the *Corinthians*, if there had been such an one, than a *Bishop*. And if his Silence be an Argument against the being of such an *Officer* as a *Bishop*; so likewise will it prove that there were no such *Officers* as *Prime-Presbyters*. But if it be thought that he might be included in the general word of *Presbyters*, or *Bishops*: so likewise the *Bishop* so called in a peculiar sense might be, according to the Language of those earliett days, and considering there was no necessity for a more accurate distinction between them.

3. *Ignatius's Epistles* sufficiently confute this Supposition, leaving it beyond doubt that in his time, within Ten Years after the death of the *Apostles*, the *Bishop* of a *Church* was much more than a *Prime-Presbyter*; sufficiently distinguished from other *Presbyters*, and considerably exalted above them. And likewise that it was not a Fancy of his own, or a *Novel Constitution* contrived just then by the *Presbyters*. And these *Epistles* have been demonstrated to be Genuine by such *Arguments* as all reasonable Persons receive other Writings upon. And no one hath advanced any thing against them worthy of regard.

4. *Blondel* thinks it but highly reasonable to own, that the *Affair of Ordination* belonged to these *Prime-Presbyters*, at least so far that

that it was not perform'd (nor ought it to Chap. I. have been) by any of the other *Presbyters*, without their bearing the principal part in the Solemnity. And *Bishops* in all Ages being at least *Prime-Presbyters*, there can be no Argument drawn from the intrinsic *Right* in *Presbyters*, in favour of their separate *Ordinations* in later Ages, any more than might have been in those early Ages. But they must be defended from other *Topics*.

Thirdly, Some learned Men amongst the *Moderns* affirm, in opposition to the *Testimonies* of the *Antients* on which the *Apostolical Institution* of *Episcopacy* relies, that the *Apostles* left the *Churches* under the joynt-Government of *Presbyters*; but that they did all after their Deaths voluntarily Consent and Agree to alter this Form of Government, and to establish *fixed Bishops* for the Government of the *Churches*, and of the *Presbyters* belonging to them. Nay, some Men of great Reading have attempted to conjecture about what Time this great Change was made, *viz.* about Forty Years after the Death of the *Apostles*. And this sometimes seems to be the Opinion of the *Author* I am now particularly considering. But I desire the following Particulars may be duly weighed.

Chap. I.

1. It may reasonably be expected that for the Proof of a *Change* so great, and so universal, some plain and evident Testimonies of *Antient Writers* who lived at the very time when this change is supposed to be made, should be produced: And that we should not in so notorious a Matter of Fact, be put off either with mere Conjectures drawn by *Modern Authors* from obscure Passages of some of the *Antients*; or with the Affirmation of those who were not capable of being *Witnesses* in this point; or with such Reasoning as cannot prove the Matter here affirmed. It is incredible that so great and remarkable a change should be brought about without being known to the Persons of that Age in which it was made: And it is as incredible that none of them should ever expressly give any Account of such a Matter of Fact. I appeal to the Persons themselves, who in these modern Times speak as confidently of this change, as if they themselves had been concerned in the making of it, whether they can instance in any one so material and notorious Matter of Fact as this, relating to the State of the *Primitive Church*, which they themselves believe without the *Testimony*, I say, the *plain and express* Testimony of good and competent *Witnesses*. It is a *Change* in the *Church* as considerable, according to them-

themselves, as a *Change* in a State from a mere *Republic* to a mix't *Monarchy*: And is it probable in the least degree, that such a Matter should pass without the express Notice of any *Writers* in the Age in which it came to pass, tho' they must necessarily be supposed to be concern'd to justify it to the World, and to set forth the great Reasons of such an Alteration? Is it probable that no *Writer* of the following Age should fix the Time, or give an express Account of it? Is it probable that the *Ecclesiastical Historians* afterwards, whose professed Business it was to relate such Matters of Fact, and who do actually give very prolix Accounts of much smaller Affairs, should give no Account, and take no notice of so remarkable a Thing, as a *Change*, which if it had been, must certainly have alarmed the whole *Christian World*? Again, it is a *Change*, according to this *Hypothesis*, of an *Apostolical Institution* concerning the Government of the *Church*, a thing which in the smallest Points raised the greatest Jealousies and Combinations amongst the *Primitive Christians*: And is it possible that it should silently pass, and without any Persons bearing Witness against it? It is a *Change* which the *Adverse Party* most certainly would for ever have objected to the *Orthodox*, in all their Disputes, and by objecting it might

Chap. I. I have hoped to have drawn more People to their side than by any one thing imaginable: And is it probable, in the lowest degree of probability, that such a *Change* of the *Apostles Institution* should not once be found to be objected by any *Heretic*, or any Person whatsoever, against the *Orthodox*? Let those believe all this, who are willing to believe every thing which seems to make for their own *Cause*: As for all others, I think they cannot avoid arguing after the following manner, A *Change* of an *Apostolical Institution*, relating to the Government of the *Church*, is a Matter of Fact very remarkable, of great Importance, such an one as must have been known and very much spoken of by the *Primitive Church*; as must have been objected against the *Orthodox* by all their *Adversaries*; and as must have been particularly recorded and accounted for, by the Writers of the Age in which it was made, and by the professed *Historians* of following Ages. But we find no *Testimony* of any such change made after the *Apostles Days*; no notice of any *Contest* and *Disturbance* in the *Church* on any such account, tho' we do upon much less; and no objection concerning any such *Change*, alleged by any of the *Primitive Writers* against their *Adversaries*, or by any of the *first Heretics* against the *Orthodox*. And therefore cannot

not but conclude that there was no such ^{Chap. I.} *Change* made in the *State* of the *Church*; not being able to think that so considerable a *Matter of Fact* would have been left to the discovery of the *Moderns*, or that the belief of it can be rationally built upon their *Conjectures*.

2. There being no express *Testimony* of competent *Witnesses* in any Age of the *Church*, concerning such a *Change* made after the Days of the *Apostles*, it may with security be argued, from the improbability of the thing it self, that there could be none. Let any one but consider the regards of the *first Christians* towards Things of the smallest Importance, which they imagined to be of *Apostolical Institution*; that they proceeded so far as to Excommunicate one another for the sake of a supposed neglect in so insignificant a Matter as the *Time* for the *Observation* of *Easter*: Nay, that they were ready to die rather than voluntarily, and designedly to depart from any thing *Apostolical*; and then judge whether any Considerations could induce either *Presbyters*, or *People*, to carry forward, and acquiesce in, such a material Alteration; or ever to believe that the *Form of Government*, in which the *Apostles* left the *Churches*, was not as good, and as capable of preventing all things evil amongst *Christians*, as any other that could possibly

Chap. I. be thought of by any in After-ages. I grant that many Matters of small Importance, which might plead *Apostolical Custom*, or *Prescription*, might be drop'd and diffused by degrees in After-Ages: But that the almost immediate *Successors* of the *Apostles* should professedly meet to alter what they knew to be the *Institution* of the *Apostles*, in such a matter as the *Government* of the *Church*, is incredible. Again, let any one consider the Account and Reasons of this *change* given by St. *Jerome*, the first *Author* who undertakes to give any *reason* for it, and then judge whether this *Change* could be made at the time fixed by those who argue upon his *Authority*, in favour of *Presbyterian Government* in the *Church*, or at any time after the *Apostles*. St. *Jerome* saith, as a Reason and Ground of this *Change*, that the *Laity* had multiplied Divisions amongst themselves, by calling themselves the *Disciples* of particular *Presbyters* (to be sure of those who Baptized them) rather than of *Christ*; and that the *Presbyters* were so fond of this, that every one of them esteemed those Persons whom they had Baptized to be their own *Disciples*, in such Sense to be sure as to make too little account of their common Master *Christ*: And that upon this occasion it was decreed all over the *Christian World*, that *Episcopacy* should be brought into the *Churches*. The
Con-

Conclusion drawn from this by the *Mo-*
derns, is, That about *Forty* Years after the
Apostles, the *Presbyters* of all *Churches* con-
sented together in the fixing of single Per-
sons in a Superiority over themselves; and
that the *Laity* universally acquiesced in this
great *Alteration*, for the remedying the a-
foresaid Evils: Which is as much as to say,
that the *Presbyters* were universally grown
extremely fond of making *Disciples* to them-
selves rather than to *Christ*; and the *Laity* of
calling *themselves* by the Names of *those* who
had Baptized them; That the *Presbyters*
whilst they were thus fond of raising their
own Names, met together in order to re-
medy this which *they* themselves were fond
of, and did unanimously agree upon a Me-
thod to remedy it; and that the *Laity*, whilst
they were thus addicted to particular *Pres-
byters*, did quietly, and without any opposi-
tion, acquiesce in what was prescribed for
the remedying an Evil which they did not
desire should be remedied. A Matter too
absurd, one would think, to be believed by
any, who know any thing of Humane Na-
ture. I grant that a majority of *Presbyters*
might agree to rectify the Miscarriages, and
to put an end to the Projects, of a smaller
number: But this Supposition is not agreea-
ble to the forementioned Account of this mat-
ter, which makes the Agreement universal.

Chap. I. And then again it is to be considered that this lesser number cannot be supposed to have quietly, and without reluctance, acquiesced in a Determination, of those who had no proper Authority over them, by which they were not only prevented from prosecuting their own Designs, but also (according to modern *Authors*) restrained from the exercise of *Powers*, in the possession of which (according to the present *Hypothesis*) they were left by the *Apostles* themselves; nay, to the careful and conscientious exercise of which they are animated, and commanded to attend in the *Apostolical* Writings. So likewise it may be supposed, that *some* of the best of the *Laity* might acquiesce in a Determination by which the dividing Tempers of *others* might be restrained and curbed: But it is not supposable that these *others* should, without the least Opposition, agree to the putting a stop to what themselves were fond of. Especially when there lay before their Eyes so visible a *Plea* against the method by which this was to be done, *viz.* That it was a deviation from the Institution of the *Apostles*: A *Plea* sufficient to have dashed the most useful Determinations at that time, and the rather because the Truth of it could not be denied. Never was any Thing known in *History* like this, that such a *Change* should be made by
Men

Men against their own Designs; or acquiesced Chap. I.
in by Multitudes both of *Presbyters* and
Lates without making one *Objection*, when
the fairest and most unanswerable *Plea* in
the World lay against it. Never, I say,
was any Matter of *Fact* parallel to this known
in *History*, unless it be that there are ma-
ny Persons of *later* Ages, who can greedily
believe such an improbable *Conjecture* as cer-
tain *Truth*, without one competent express
Testimony to support it. Let us put any
of these Persons themselves into the Place
of the *Primitive Presbyters*, governing the
Churches by their common Counsels; know-
ing that they were left in this Office, and
directed how to perform it by the *Apostles*
themselves; affecting to have *Disciples* called
by their own Name: And we may make
themselves Judges whether they would vo-
luntarily, and professedly have met together
with a design of remedying their own Va-
nity; whether they would have done this by
divesting themselves of the *exercise* of Powers
to which they had been called by the *Apo-
stles* themselves, or their *Disciples*: Nay,
whether if they had been Out-voted in this
Matter, they would have silently yielded,
without so much as alleging for themselves
the just *Plea* they would have had against such
an *Alteration*, or making the least opposition
upon this Account. Add to this the Impro-
bability

Chap. I. bability that the succeeding *Presbyters* should agree to remedy an Evil which I shall shew by and by to have been in the *Apostles* Days; and this by a *Method* which (according to this *Hypothesis*) the *Apostles* refused to prescribe for this end, and by alteration of that particular *Method* which they left, without doubt, as the best and properest they could think of for the remedying this *Evil*, as well as others, which they knew to be in the Church. This would have been directly to have opposed their Wisdom, and Prudence, to that of the *Apostles* themselves; (which I cannot believe concerning them) and must have furnished all their *Contemporaries* with an unanswerable Argument against their Proceedings. And now, to recapitulate what hath been said under this head, That the *Successors* of the *Apostles*, and the *Christian* People should so soon, designedly, universally, and without any reluctance, depart from what they knew to be an *Apostolical Institution*, is extreme strange; that they should do this in a very considerable Instance; that they should do this in order to remedy an Evil which the *Apostles* knew to be in their own Days, and thought not proper to remedy in this method; that the *Presbyters* by doing this, should voluntarily and universally agree to restrain themselves from the Exercise of that Power, and Authority, to which the *Apostles* themselves declare

declare them to be Called, and Ordained; Chap. I.
 these are Suppositions still stranger: But
 that this great Alteration should be contri-
 ved and effected, and universally submit-
 ted to, by the very Persons whose Designs,
 and Humours, and vain Affectation it was
 ordained to remedy, and put a stop to, is
 the strangest, and most unaccountable thing
 imaginable. And yet all these *Suppositions*
 must be admitted as true, and certain, if the
Opinion I am now considering be admitted.
 But these *Suppositions* are absurd, and impos-
 sible. Therefore, so is the *Opinion* founded
 upon them.

The only Reply given by a late Author to *Defense of*
 the Argument drawn from the improbability *Mod. Non-*
 that the Antient Church should so generally *conf. P. L.*
 have fallen in with Episcopacy, if it had not *p. 180.*
 had its Rise from the Apostles, is this, that
this Notion being once started, the Fathers may
be easily supposed to have taken it from one ano-
ther as they did the Chilistical Opinion. I have
 before shewn the great difference between
 their Testimonies, as to Matter of Fact, and
 their Opinions founded in great part upon
 their own Reasonings, and so refer the Reader
 to what hath been before said. I shall now
 add, 1. That supposing the Fathers ready to
 deliver any Point down as Apostolical, this
 gives no account how it may be supposed
 that the whole Body of Christians, all over
 the

Chap. I. the World, should so soon fall in with *Episcopacy*, which was the Matter here undertaken to be accounted for. 2. The agreement of some of the *Fathers* about the *Chilistical Opinion*, shews only how fond they were of any thing they had any reason to think *Apostolical*, tho' mixed with their own Reasoning; and so is an Argument in favour of the *Apostolical Institution* of *Episcopacy*. For if there were such a sense in the *Antient Church*, concerning any thing they thought *Apostolical*, let us consider that according to this *Author*, the whole *Christian Church* could not but know that the *Apostles* instituted the *Presbyterian Form of Government*, and then see if this can give us any account of their easiness to forsake what they all knew to be *Apostolical*. Had they known the *Doctrine* contrary to the *Mellennial Notion* to have been *Apostolical*; and universally departed from it whilst they knew this, something might be urged from hence. But at present here is no *parallel*: For supposing them to be easy to admit a *Doctrine* of no great moment as *Apostolical* (upon some *Testimony*) the contrary to which they could not directly prove; this will not shew that they were easy to admit a change in that *Government* which they knew to be *Apostolical*, but rather the contrary, that they would with the greatest Zeal have adhered to it.

3. How

2. How unworthy is it in this *Author* to Chap. I.
talk of Designs of gaining and supporting
Grandeur, when according to our *Brethren*
themselves, *Episcopacy* was fixed in as great
an height as can be reasonably wished, at a
time when all the Grandeur of a *Bishop* was
to be *first* in *Labours*, and *first* in *Martyr-*
dom? I find any *Contradictions* can be urged
rather than some Truths admitted. But to
return.

3. Add to this, that there are particular,
and express *Testimonies* to the contrary; not
only of *St. Jerome* himself, on whom it is
unjustly founded, who traces up *Bishops*, in the
sense in which the word was used in his own
days, to the times of the *Apostles* themselves;
not only of professed *Church-Historians* who
all agree in the immediate Succession of *Bishops*
to the *Apostles* themselves in the Government
of the *Church*; but of *Writers* in that very
intermediate space, in which this Parity of
Presbyters is asserted to have been in the
Church. I shall mention but two; but those
such as may justly be stiled uncontrollable.
The *first* is of *St. John*, the last of the *Apo-*
stles, in whose latter days we may well
imagine the Affairs of the *Church* began to
be in such hands as the *Apostles* were most
willing they should continue in after their
deaths. The *Angels* of the *Churches* to whom
He writes in the *Revelations*, are allowed by
Blonæ

Chap. 1. *Blondel* himself (the chief Patron of the Opinion now before us) to have been particular Persons to whom the Care of the Churches was in such peculiar sense committed, that they were accountable for the Defects in their Churches. That these could not be particular *Presbyters*, without any others in any sense inferior to them, he likewise allows; I suppose because it is a great Absurdity to suppose but one *Presbyter* in each of those Churches there spoken of. And that they could not be merely *Prime Presbyters* (as he would willingly make them) is as evident, because it could not be the part of a *Prime Presbyter* (according to himself) to be accountable for the Faults of those Flocks over which other *Presbyters* were appointed. It remains therefore, that they were in reality, tho' not in name, *Bishops*, with *Presbyters* subject to them; and consequently that the Churches were not universally governed by *Presbyters* without *Bishops*, before the Year of our Lord 140; and consequently that the Establishment of *Bishops* was not then made at that time, but before the death of all the *Apostles*, as Mr. *Baxter* thought himself obliged to acknowledge, with respect to some Churches. The other Testimony I mean to allege is that of *Ignatius* (not Ten Years after the Death of the *Apostles*) who in many places of his *Epistles*,

makes

makes as manifest a Distinction between Bi-Chap. I.
bishops and *Presbyters* as hath been usual in
 the Ages after Him; and carries the *Epis-*
copal Dignity to a very great heighth. Now
 because He speaks very highly of *Bishops*,
 who in those Days were the chiet Supports *Defense of*
 and Ornaments of the *Christian Cause*, as *Mod. Non-*
 well as Governours in the *Church*, a Late *conf. P. I.*
 Author is pleas'd to drop Insinuations a-
 gainst the Genuineness of these *Epistles* with-
 out alleging any single Consideration against
 what hath been written by Bishop Pearson
 in that Cause, so entirely to the satisfaction
 of Impartial Judges: which surely I may
 venture to say is a Proceeding not very
 worthy of one concern'd for Truth. Or if
 they be Genuine, He doth, in effect, pay
 the Writer of them the civil Complement
 of being *out of his Wits*, or a *Blasphemer*;
 tho' no one had more Honours given Him
 by the *Primitive Church* than this *Martyr*.
 I say, He pays Him this Complement, unless
 his way, or some other like it, be taken to
 soften some of his *Expressions*. The way
 He proposeth is this, That *Ignatius* might
 perhaps magnify the power of the *Bishop* above
 that of a *Presbyter* as Divine, in opposition to
 those who might perhaps represent any such dis-
 ference in degree, fixt by *Humane Prudence* to
 promote Peace and Order, as unlawful. That
 is, That *Ignatius* magnified the power of a
Bishop

Chap. I. *Bishop* as *Divine*, which He knew to be an *Institution* merely *Humane*; that He magnified it to this degree many Years before it was heard of in the *Church*, unless this *Author* will recede from the opinion of *Blondel*, and bring up the decree for the Institution of *Episcopacy* to the very Borders of the *Apostolical* Age; and that He did this in opposition to a sort of Men who never were heard of in the *Christian Church* till these last Years either amongst the *Heretics*, or *Orthodox*. Behold to what unaccountable Suppositions *Prejudice* and *Resolution* will carry Men: whereas I desire to infer nothing from these *Epistles* but this, that *Ignatius* knew it to be agreeable to the mind of the *Apostles* that there should be *Bishops* superior to *Presbyters*; that this was no new, or strange thing even in his Days; and that therefore the settled *Government* of the *Church* was *Episcopal* long before the time fix'd by *Blondel*, and not first introduc'd by the consent of the *Presbyters* of that Age, or indeed of any other. This, I confess, I cannot but think a *Demonstration* against the *Hypothesis* of that *Learned Man*: And it ought to have great weight, because there is nothing throughout his long, and very obscure *Apolo-*
logy of any force to invalidate this single *Testimony* against Him.

4. Last of all, Because I have here alleged Chap. I. against the *Opinion* I am now considering, that there is no *express Testimony* of any *competent Witnesses* to support it, which in all reason may be expected in the *Case* of an *Important*, and very remarkable *matter of Fact*; it is but just that I should consider those *Antient Authors*, whom the *Patrons* of this *Opinion* profess to follow in it; and impartially examine the *Passages* cited out of Them, that so it may be seen how well They can bear that *Conclusion* which is built upon Them, or how effectually they prove against the *Apostolical Institution* of *Episcopacy*.

I. The *first* who is produc'd as expressly opposing the Superiority of *Bishops* over *Presbyters* is *Aerius*. This He was led to do out of private Resentment. But of how little account He ought to be in the *Case* before us will appear from the few following Considerations: that He lived near Two Hundred Years after this Alteration in the State of the *Church* is pretended to have been made; that He pretends not to attest any such matter of Fact; to produce Witnesses for it, or to settle the time when it was made; that He affirms not there was ever any time, after the *Apostles*, in which there was not such a Superiority;

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that

Chap. I. that all He pretends to is to reason from some Expressions us'd by the *Apostles* that their first Design was to make no such difference in *Ecclesiastical Officers*, which reasonings shall be examin'd in their due place; and that He doth not so much as affirm that they themselves did not afterwards find occasion to alter their first Design; that his Opinion was condemn'd, and accounted extremely strange, and wholly new, and himself had no Followers; and last of all, that amongst all his Pretenses, and Reasonings, in favour of *Presbyters*, He doth not lay claim to the right of *Ordination*; and that in the midst of all his Resentments He did not attempt to exercise that *Right*, which ought to be of great force in the *Cause* I am now particularly concern'd in. Let any one, therefore, judge from all this, whether any thing of moment can be alleged from *Aerius*, as an authentic *Testimony* in favour of this great *Alteration* in the *Church* so much contended for by the *Modern Adversaries* of *Episcopacy*; or in contradiction to the concurrent *Testimony* of *Antient Writers* concerning the *Right* of *Bishops* to *Govern*, and *Ordain*.

II. The chief *Patron*, amongst the *Antients*, of this supposed *Alteration* in the *Church*, on whom the *Moderns* build much, is *St. Jerome*,

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rome, with whom those few other *Antient* Chap. I.
Writers, who speak any thing after the same
manner, must stand, or fall. Let us, there-
fore, see of what weight the Passages al-
leged from this *Father* are in the present
Debate.

I. We must call to mind that the *Alte-*
ration we are now speaking of is a remark-
able matter of Fact, to which we may
justly require the Testimony of competent
Witnesses, concerning the time and manner
of doing it. Now *St. Jerome* was not so
much as born till Two Hundred Years after
this Change is pretended to be made: So
that what might be expected from him is
that He should not only affirm this; (which
signifieth nothing, because of Himself He
can be no sufficient Witness to it;) but that
He should allege the express Testimony of
those who were Witnesses to it. This He
doth not attempt to do: and therefore can-
not be a Witness to the matter of Fact,
but only (if the most be granted) one of
the same Opinion with the *Modern Authors*
I am now considering.

II. It being only the Opinion and Judge-
ment of *St. Jerome*, which can be drawn
from the Passages alleged out of him; and
this manifestly founded upon his own Rea-

Chap. I. Inings from some Passages in the Writings of the *Apostles*, it is not agreeable to the Principles of those who follow him in it, that we should receive it merely on his Authority, but that we should strictly examine the Reasons on which He founds it: which shall be done in the next *Chapter*, when I come to consider the *Pleas* in favour of the *Rights* of *Presbyters* urg'd from the *New Testament*. But in the mean while that we may see how far this *Father* patronizes the Opinion of those *Moderns* who affirm an Alteration to have been made in the equality of all *Presbyters* about Forty Years after the Death of the *Apostles*, and pretend to be his Followers in this, it is fit we should examine as carefully as possible what the Judgment of this *Father* was, by carefully considering what it is He affirms, and by what Arguments He attempts to prove the Truth of what He maintains.

He doth indeed deliver it as his Judgment, that according to the original design of the *Apostles* the *Churches* were once govern'd by the common Councils of *Presbyters*; and that there was afterwards, upon a just occasion, an Alteration made in this, and another sort of Government settled in all *Churches*. But to those very *Presbyters*, to whose Government the *Churches* were once left, He never ascribes the power of Ordaining others, but denies

denies it to all *Presbyters*: And again, He neither affirms nor implies it to be his Opinion, that this Alteration was made after the Death of the *Apostles*, or that it was made by the *Presbyters* themselves met in Consultation. So that these things are entirely new, and manifest Additions to what St. *Jerome* says, nor to be deduc'd by any Rules of reasoning from his Words. How then can the Modern *Patrons* of *Presbyters* father this their best, and most esteem'd Scheme upon an Author in whom no such things are to be found. On the contrary, that St. *Jerome* either had no settled and determined Judgment in this matter, or meant to signify that the *Alteration* He speaks of was made in the Days of the *Apostles* themselves, and by their Authority, or with their Approbation, is to me manifest from the following Observations, which I desire may be regarded.

1. I have observ'd already that he doth not say this *Alteration* was made by the *Presbyters* after the Death of the *Apostles*, and the Settlement of the *Churches* according to their Minds. This ought to have its weight, because it would have been very much to the purpose he had then in view: And that it is incredible that He should have been of this Opinion, and not have alleged it when He was pleading for an original

Chap. I. equality of *Bishops* and *Presbyters*, I appeal to his Followers, who never have thought it sufficient to that purpose to affirm such an Alteration to have been made, without affirming it likewise to have been made by Men after the *Apostles* Deaths. His Design manifestly was to say all that He thought true against the distinction between *Bishops* and *Presbyters*: And it is often observ'd, (and especially by the last Advocate for the Rights of *Presbyters*) how easy the *Fathers* found it to run things to an extremity in any Cause they undertook. And yet St. *Jerome* in all his Zeal against this *Distinction* saith only that there was a time when this *Distinction* was not in being: but never intimates that it was not made and settled in the Days of the *Apostles* themselves; or that the *Presbyters* of After-ages alter'd the design of the *Apostles* after their Deaths: which single thing, if He could have said with any Truth, must have done his Cause more service than all He hath alleged; and therefore, I conclude, He would certainly have said it, and endeavour'd to prove it, if He had thought it true. But that he did not think this true, but rather that the *Apostles* themselves made the Alteration He speaks of, I have not only this *Negative*, but other *positive* Arguments to urge.

2. I argue from his alleging only some Expressions in the Writings of the *Apostles* and not any Words, or Testimonies of any Writer after them. For supposing his Reasonings from these Expressions just (which indeed they are not) they will not prove that the *Alteration* spoken of was not made by the *Apostles* themselves after the time in which they wrote the Passages cited by Him: Nor will his alleging them shew that it was his Design to prove this. And again, If his Design had been to prove that this *Alteration* was made some time after the Death of the *Apostles*, his Business must have been to shew, not only that there was a time during the Lives of the *Apostles*, but also that there was an intermediate Space in which there was no distinction between *Bishops* and *Presbyters*: and this from Passages of some Writers, or Records of some Churches, in that intermediate Space. But this He doth not so much as attempt to do: And from hence I conclude that it was not his Design to affirm, or intimate any such thing.

3. I argue from his reckoning up *Bishops* in the Church of *Alexandria* to the time of the *Apostles* themselves, who, after they were chosen by the *Presbyters*, must have been, according to himself, *Bishops* in the sense in which that Word was us'd in his own days.

Chap. I. days. These *Bishops* must according to St. *Jerome* have been the *Governors* of the *Church*, and of the *Presbyters* themselves: for He makes all the *Care* and *Solicitude* concerning *Ecclesiastical Affairs* to be devolv'd upon them as soon as they were constituted. They must be the *Ordainers* of other *Presbyters*, even according to *Blondel* himself, unless He deny to them what he grants to his *Prime-Presbyters* in each *Church*. So that here are *Bishops* with distinct Powers, after their *Election*, from those of their *Electors* (as distinct as the Powers of a *General* from those of the *Army* which chuses him, which is one of the *Similitudes* by which He illustrates this matter;) immediately succeeding St. *Mark* in the *Church* of *Alexandria*: And consequently the like in other *Churches*, according to St. *Jerome*, who makes all *Churches* uniform, and the reception of *Episcopacy*, whenever it was receiv'd, to be universal at the same time. From whence I argue, that the *Alteration* spoken of by Him from *Presbyterian* to *Episcopal Government* was thought by Him to have been made before the *Death* of the *Apostles*. For the *Alteration* He speaks of is the chusing one out of the *Presbyters* to be set over them, instead of remaining in their original *Equality*. This is the *Alteration*, I say, He speaks of; and this He affirms to have been in the *Church* of

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of *Alexandria*, without any interruption, Chap. I.
from St. Mark's Days, in whose place these
Bishops are, without doubt, spoken of by
St. *Jerome*, as succeeding in a much more
eminent sense than the body of the *Pres-
byters*. For all He here saith in favour of
these *Presbyters* is that they chose these *Bi-
shops*: But after that Choice He manifestly
makes as great a Distinction between these
Bishops, and the *Electors* the *Presbyters* as was
between the *Bishops*, and *Presbyters* of his
own Age. So that it is manifest that St. *Je-
rome* was of opinion, that there were *Bishops*,
in the eminent sense of the Word, in the
Church of *Alexandria* from the time of St.
Mark. 1. From his using the word *Episcopus*,
which He never intimates to have been used
for a *Prime-Presbyter*, or any other *Officer* but
a *Bishop* eminently so call'd. 2. From his
saying that this Word was appropriated to
this *Officer*, even from St. *Mark*'s Days: For
as the confus'd use of this Word is his Ar-
gument against the original *Distinction* of
Bishops and *Presbyters*, so the Appropriation
of this Word to one *Officer*, infers a Distincti-
on of his *Office* from that of *Presbyters*. How-
ever, here is an Argument for the Appropri-
ation of the Word, even in the Days of
some of the *Apostles*, contrary to *Blondel*,
and others who pretend to follow him. 3.
From his making this *Bishop* to answer to
the

Chap. I. the General of an Army, whose Powers after He is chosen are vastly distinct from the Powers of the Army which chose Him. 4. From his own account of the introducing Episcopacy, viz. The chusing one from among the Presbyters to whom the Care of all things should in a peculiar sense belong. If therefore at Alexandria one such Officer was chosen, then at Alexandria there were, according to St. Jerome, Bishops, in the eminent sense of the Word, from St. Mark's Days. 5. There is no reason against this Interpretation, but his saying that the Presbyters chose this Bishop, which is no Argument against the Superiority of his Office, even by the will of the Apostles, and particularly as to Ordination, after such Choice was made: any more than an Army's chusing their General is an Argument against the Superiority of his Office, and his Right to grant all Commissions under Himself, after such Choice.

4. I argue from the Absurdity, which I would not suppose Him to maintain, since He doth not say any thing like it, that the Presbyters should immediately alter the Apostolical Settlement of their Churches, and voluntarily, and unanimously agree to reform the Abuses themselves were fond of, and to restrain the Exercise of those Rights, in which they knew the Apostles had left them. But of this, and the like Absurdities in that

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Hypothesis which some would willingly fix Chap. I.
upon St. Jerome, I have before sufficiently
spoken.

5. I argue from the Expression St. Jerome
useth in the account He gives of the Set-
tlement of *Episcopacy* in the Church, viz. *Toto*
orbe decretum: which are not words of vo-
luntary Compact, and Consent, amongst
Presbyters; but agreeable to an Authority
superior to those *Presbyters* who were to be
restrained, and whose Abuses were to be
reform'd by this Decree. And there being,
according to the present *Hypothesis*, no Au-
thority before this Decree, superior to *Presby-*
ters, unless that of the *Apostles* themselves, or
some particular extraordinary Church-Officers
appointed by the *Apostles*; this Decree for the
Establishment of *Episcopacy* must be understood
by St. Jerome to have been in the Age of the
Apostles themselves.

6. I argue from the same St. Jerome's af-
firming James to have been made Bishop of
Jerusalem by the *Apostles*, Timothy of Ephesus,
Titus of Crete, Polycarp of Smyrna. This is
sufficient to prove that He himself thought
that, whatever the original design of the
Apostles was with respect to the powers of
Presbyters, an End was put to it by the *Apo-*
stles themselves, who did in these several
Churches not only themselves govern, but
appointed others to Govern, and to Ordain.
For

Chap. I. For what room, I pray, is here for the joynt-counsels of *Presbyters*, consider'd by themselves, when once these Persons were appointed to a superior Office in these several *Churches*? If any say that these were only *Itinerant Extraordinary Church-Officers*, not design'd to continue in the *Church*, on the other hand, I desire to know how they can prove that the *Apostles* design'd those for the governing of the *Churches*, and the ordaining of other *Presbyters*, whom themselves immediately restrain'd from these Offices. But that is not the Point here, St. *Jerome's* Opinion is what we are now enquiring after: And it is manifest He speaks of them as of *Bishops* in the eminent sense of the Word, and consequently that his Judgment was that the *Apostles* themselves made the Decree concerning *Episcopacy* which He speaks of.

7. I argue from those Marks He gives of that time in which He affirms the *Alteration* He speaks of to have been made. That the *Laitie* began to forget their great Master *Christ*, and one to say, *I am of Paul*; another, *I am of Apollos*; another, *I am of Cephas*: And that the *Presbyters* began to claim those whom they baptized as their own *Disciples*: These two things He saith were the occasion of the *Alteration* He speaks of. Now these two Marks, we know, do agree exactly to the time of the *Apostles*, from St. *Paul's*

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first *Epistle* to the *Corinthians*, in the first Chap. I. Chapter of which He laments the dissensions of the *Laity*, v. 12. and likewise intimates the other Humour to have been too much amongst those who baptized the *Laity*, v. 14, 15. in which He thanks God He baptiz'd but one *Family* amongst them, lest any should tax Him with that foolish Vanity of endeavouring to obtain many Disciples, as it were to himself, by baptizing. Indeed it is not necessary to suppose that St. *Jerome* thought that immediately, upon this Disorder in the Church of *Corinth* this *Alteration* was made, but rather when it appear'd that this Humour was not so check'd by St. *Paul's* Exhortations, but that it crept into other Churches likewise. What I would say therefore is this, That we are assured that these Marks agree to the Age of the *Apostles*; and that it is extremely probable that they would not leave it to succeeding *Presbyters* to provide Remedies for the Evils which they knew to be in their own Times; that we have no such Marks belonging peculiarly to the Age after them, and therefore have reason to think that the *Alteration* (if at all) was made before the Death of the *Apostles*. I appeal to our *Adversaries* themselves, whether they would not esteem such an Argument as this a Demonstration of their own *Scheme*, could they find these Marks

Chap. I. Marks expressly fixed upon the Age after the *Apostles*, which the *Apostles* themselves witness to have belonged to their own Age: And I appeal to every impartial Person, whether it be not a good Argument that *St. Jerome* understood this *Alteration* to have been made in the Age of the *Apostles*, that He gives such Marks of the *time* when He thought it made, as peculiarly agree to that Age. Or if these Marks can agree to the following Age, can any one believe that the *Presbyters* then living should pretend to prescribe a *Remedy* for an *Evil*, which they knew the *Apostles* had refus'd to prescribe for the same *Evil*, unless it be suppos'd they had *Directions* given down from the very *Apostles* for the prescribing it, upon the increase of that *Evil*, which will amount to an *Apostolical Institution*, and as effectually restrain all *Presbyters* from all Exercise of their supposed original Rights, unless what is founded upon apparent Necessity.

8. I argue from his calling *Episcopacy* one of the *Traditions Apostolical*, which He doth in one of the places in which He zealously pleads against the original Distinction between *Bishops* and *Presbyters*. An Argument which was never answered either by *Blondel*, or *Salmasius*, tho' it was thought requisite to promise an Answer to it. The only Reply that hath been made by any to it is, that

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St. Jerome in other places speaks of things which were purely *Customs Ecclesiastical* as *Apostolical Traditions*, from whence they would collect that he meant only *Ecclesiastical Custom* in this place. But they produce no Passage at all parallel to this, to prove the Justness of this Reply. For it is one thing for a *Writer* to say, that for the sake of the Peace, and good of the *Church*, People should look upon, and observe, good and innocent *Customs* as if they were *Apostolical Traditions*; and another to call any thing absolutely an *Apostolical Tradition*. And again, It is very just to call any matter of Practice both an *Ecclesiastical Custom*, and an *Apostolical Tradition*, without meaning the same thing by both these Terms. None of their Instances therefore prove that St. Jerome did not here intend to call *Episcopacy* an *Apostolical Tradition* in the literal sense of the Words. In one place indeed He seems to be most of all resolved to depress the Eminence of *Bishops*, and to put it upon *Ecclesiastical Custom*. But He manifestly avoids opposing that to *Apostolical Institution*, and is contented only to deny that our Lord himself made the Distinction: artfully, one would think, at that time avoiding either to affirm, or deny that the *Apostles* instituted this difference amongst *Church-Officers*.

Chap. I.

9. I argue from St. Jerome's not granting to *Presbyters* the *Right of Ordination*, amidst all his Pretensions in *their Names*. It is very remarkable that tho' in order to equal them to *Bishops* He gives the *Government* of the first *Churches* into their hands, He doth not mention the affair of *Ordination*: which certainly He would have done had He at the same time thought it had ever belonged to them. For it had been as much to his purpose, (and he had equal Reasons for it) to have affirmed that they *originally* were entrusted with the *Right of Ordination*, as it was to affirm that they at first governed the Churches: Nor can there be any Reason thought of why he should not expressly have affirmed the *one* as well as the *other*, had he thought them both true. On the contrary, what is more remarkable, He doth at the same time himself deny to them this *Right of Ordination*. This *Right*, I say: For of that his Words must be understood, when He asks, in order to carry their Cause as high as he could, *Quid enim, excepta Ordinatione, facit Episcopus, quod Presbyter non faciat?* A *Bishop* in his Days had many other Powers to which *Presbyters* did not pretend, besides that of *Ordination*: and therefore the *Question* was not at all to his purpose, unless he meant to signify by it as his Opinion, that the *Presbyters* were ne

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ver entrusted with the affair of Ordination, tho' they were with that of the Government of the Churches of Christ by their joynt-Counsels: by which means he leaves an uninterrupted Succession to Church-Officers superior in this to Presbyters, and so destroys the Supposition of Blondel and others, of their continuing in the Exercise of this Right till near the middle of the second Century. Add to this, that if St. Jerome had designed, as Blondel and others pretend, to affirm in this place, that even in his own Age Presbyters did every thing, except Ordination, which Bishops did, He would rather have said *Quid facit Episcopus, exceptâ Ordinatione, quod Presbyter non facit?* I say, His Design would have obliged him to express himself in the Indicative Mood rather than the Subjunctive: the use of which is a Grammatical Demonstration that He intended by this Question to ask, not what the Bishops of his Age did, except Ordination, which the Presbyters likewise did not, but what the Bishops did which the Presbyters might not likewise do, lawfully, and according to their original Rights, excepting Ordination. And that this was his meaning is plain likewise from St. Chrysostom, who follows him in his Opinion of the Original Rights of Presbyters, and owns expressly, that Bishops are superior to Them in point of Ordination, tho' in that only: And

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Chap. I. **W**hen he is examining their *Original Rights*, and not the State they were in, in his Days, in which he knew that *Bishops* were, in other respects, *superior* to *Presbyters*. At least this may be said, that no one can urge that *St. Jerome* did ever expressly patronize the Pretensions of any *Presbyters* to this Right; but that he rather disclaims it in their Names. I could allege many more noted Passages and Expressions out of this *Father*, which do, I think, manifestly shew that, tho' he might think that there was a time in the days of the *Apostles*, in which *Presbyters* in a *joynt Assembly* govern'd the Churches, to be sure under the Inspection, as much as could be, of the *Apostles* and other extraordinary *Church-Officers*; yet he never thought this with respect to any time after the *Apostles*, but was of opinion that the *Decree* concerning *Fixed Episcopacy* was made in their Days. But if any should think to oppose to all that I have said any Passages in the Writings of this *Father*, I answer, that it must be granted, either that he was not constant in his Judgment concerning this Matter, or that his true Sense must be judged of from the *Number*, and clearness of the Passages alleged on both sides. If the former be granted, his *Authority* is not worth contending for: If the latter, it must certainly

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be yielded to be on the side of the *Apostolical Institution of Episcopacy*. Chap. I.

III. If to *Aerius*, and *St. Jerome*, any other *Authors* amongst the *Antients* can be added in favour of the original parity of *Ecclesiastical Officers*, this must be allow'd, that what they allege is either taken up from *These*, or founded upon Reasonings of their own from some Expressions in the *New Testament*: that none of them all affirm the *Institution of Episcopacy* to have been owing to the consent and compact of *Presbyters* of succeeding Times; or that it was not the work of the *Apostles* themselves; or that there ever was a Time, after the Death of the *Apostles*, in which there were not *Bishops*, properly so call'd, in the Church. From all this laid together, therefore, let impartial *Readers* judge what *Authentic Testimony* our *Brethren* have to produce for so notorious a matter of Fact as the Alteration of the Government of the Church near the middle of the *Second Century*; or how justly the *Patrons* of this *Hypothesis* set up *St. Jerome* as their mighty Advocate: since we see not one express *Testimony* produc'd for it, and *St. Jerome* in many Passages of his *Writings* absolutely contradicting their Opinion. Thus much I thought fit to say in answer to that *Scheme*, to which the principal,

Chap. I. cipal, and most Learned Advocates of the Rights of Presbyters seem most fondly to adhere: And I hope what I have said may be thought satisfactory by the best and most equal Judges.

Thus have I endeavour'd to establish the Apostolical Institution of Episcopacy, upon which the Right of Bishops to Ordain is founded, as well by answering the Objections which have been advanced against the Sufficiency of the concurrent Testimony of Antient Church-Writers concerning it, as by shewing the Weakness and Unjustifiableness of those Schemes and Hypotheses which have been by Learned Modern Writers confronted to this Testimony, and to the Conclusion we build upon it. I proceed now to examine the Pleas, and Arguments advanced in behalf of the Right of Presbyters to Ordain: This is the Subject of the next Chapter, which, I hope, will end in the full Confirmation of what hath been already said in this.

CHAP. II.
Of the Government of the Church, or how the middle of the Second Century; or how fully the Powers of this Hypothesis are shown as their mighty Advocates: And we see not one express Testimony produced for it, and St. Jerome in many Places of his works absolutely condemning their Opinion. Thus much I thought fit to say in answer to that demand, to which the page

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C H A P. II.

The Pleas alleged for the Right of Presbyters to Ordain, proposed, and examined,

II. **T**HE *second* Thing which I have undertaken to do, is to examine impartially the *Pleas* that are still alleged for the *Right of Presbyters to Ordain*: that so it may be judged by *all*, whether their Claims have any just Foundation; and be seriously consider'd by *Themselves*, whether they ought to be continued.

Sect. I. *The first Plea, taken from the Identity of Bishops and Presbyters, examined.*

The *first Plea* is taken from the *Identity of Bishops and Presbyters*: Which, if it can be prov'd in the *Sense* contended against by *Episcopal Writers*, I grant, doth certainly demonstrate an *Original Right* in *Presbyters to Ordain*. A late *Author*, in stating this Point, saith that, *To make good this Plea two things are to be cleared, 1. That Presbyters are by Divine Right the same as Bishops.* And

Def. of Mod. Non-conf. P. I. p. 72

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Chap. II. 2. That it thence follows that Presbyters may warrantably Ordain other Persons Presbyters. The true meaning of the first of these Positions, if He designs it should be of any Service in his Cause, must be this, That those who are now in a peculiar sense call'd Presbyters have originally by Divine Right, (that is, according to his proof of it, by the will of the Apostles;) the same Office in the Church with those who are now in a peculiar sense called Bishops. This is the only Sense of that Position which can be of any Service to his Cause: And now let us examine the Proof He brings for it.

It appears, He saith, from hence, That such as were solemnly set apart to the Sacred Ministry, and entrusted with the Keys of the Kingdom of God, and authorized to administer all Ordinances, in the Church, to the Faithful committed to their Care, are in Scripture styl'd Bishops, and Elders or Presbyters, without any mark of Distinction. In answer to this, I freely grant that such as were set apart to the Office of Presbyters, and entrusted with the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven (in the sense in which Presbyters were ever entrusted with them) and authorized to administer the Ordinances of Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, and to preach, instruct, and take care of the Faithful committed to them, are called in the New Testament, *ἐπίσκοποι* Overseers,

seers, Inspectors, and Curators of the Flock of Chap. II.
 Christ, as the word *Bishops* signifieth. But
 we are not advanced one step farther by all
 this. For this will not prove that these
 very Persons were not always subject to o-
 ther Church-Officers, and at this very time
 to such as *Timothy* and *Titus*, as well as to
 the *Apostles* themselves; this will not prove
 them to be the same in their Office, with
 those who were afterwards called *Επίσκοποι*,
 in an eminent sense; this will prove nothing
 but that *Presbyters* are invested with all those
Powers which belonged to those who were
 called *Επίσκοποι* in the *New Testament*. But
 what those *Powers* were cannot be conclud-
 ed from hence. Indeed if our *Argument* stood
 thus, that *Bishops*, now peculiarly so called,
 inherit the Office of those who were some-
 times called *Bishops* in the *New Testament*,
 the present *Plea* would certainly be good,
 that they who are now peculiarly called
Presbyters have the same Offices of Right,
 belonging to them, which are claimed by
 those peculiarly called *Bishops*, because they
 are the Officers called *Bishops* in the *New*
Testament. But when our *Affertion* is,
 that *Bishops*, eminently so called, answer,
 not to those who are sometimes called so
 in the *New Testament*, but to those supe-
 rior Church-Officers, whose Office we find
 there to have been to Govern and Ordain;
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Chap. II. and that *Presbyters* have no Right originally to exercise some of those Functions which were exercised by such Ecclesiastical Officers as *Timothy* and *Titus*: I say, when these are our Positions, it can signify nothing to allege that *Presbyters* are the Officers who were called *Bishops* in the *New Testament*, because this will entitle them only to the Office of those who are there called *Bishops*, not to that of those who were acknowledged to be superior to those there called *Bishops*. To allege this can signify nothing, unless it be included in the signification of the word *ἐπισκοποι*, that all who were ever called so, were entitled to *Ordain* and *Govern*, as well as to *Teach*, instruct and guide their Flocks into all necessary Truth. But that this is included in the Word, was never so much as pretended. It being, therefore, a sufficient ground of the *Presbyters* being called *Bishops*, that they are in a very proper sense, Overseers, and have the Care of Souls entrusted to them, which is all that is implied in the Word; it doth not follow from their being called so, that they had other Powers which are not necessarily included in that Word. If they have Powers sufficient to make that Name proper to their Office, this, I say, was a sufficient Ground why that Name was given them, before there was any design of fixing peculiar

culiar Names to all Ecclesiastical Officers. But Chap. II.
they have Powers which are a sufficient
ground for that Name, without supposing
them empowered to Ordain others: There-
fore it cannot follow from their being called
Exorcists in the *New Testament*, that they are
entrusted with the Right of Ordination; or
that they are called to all the Offices claimed
by Bishops eminently so styled in Modern
Times.

The fixing the Name of Bishops upon those
who are in an eminent sense Overseers, and
Curators of the Church, was a Matter purely
arbitrary, and now founded merely upon
Custom: And it is not from the difference
of Names we argue to the difference of the
Offices; and therefore cannot think it of any
Importance, on the other side, to argue from
the Identity of Names heretofore to the Iden-
tity of Offices. Had there been no difference
of Names settled, but had both Bishops and
Presbyters been called by one common Name
to this Day, whether Bishops, or Presbyters,
all the Arguments had still stood as firm for
Episcopacy. If it could be shewn that there
ought to be a Distinction in the Offices of those
called by that common Name; that there
always had been in the Church Officers supe-
rior to the Teachers of particular Congrega-
tions; that these Teachers had not the Ex-
ercise of the Power of Ordination ever left to
them;

Chap. II. them; and were always under the Inspection of some other *superior Officers*; the Cause of *Episcopacy* must have stood firm. And yet it is from this *difference* of Names now settled, that this *Argument* now drawn from the *Identity* of Names in the *New Testament* took its rise. Let us suppose, therefore, that this *difference* of Names were removed, and it were now usual to call both *Bishops* and *Presbyters* by one common Name, this *Identity* of Name would never prove that there was no difference in their Offices even at the time when there was no distinction in their Names. Much less can it prove that *Presbyters* have the same *Rights* which are claimed by those now called *Bishops*, to allege that they were *once* called *Bishops*; unless it can be shewn that those who were so called in the *Apostles* Age, had actually then all the *Ecclesiastical Power* of those who have been called so, in a peculiar sense, in after Ages.

The *Argument* founded upon this *Plea*, stated truly, can amount to no more than this, *Presbyters* are called likewise *Bishops*, or *Overseers* in the *New Testament*: Therefore certainly they may justly claim all the *Rights* belonging to those who were there called *Bishops*. This I heartily acknowledge. But what those *Rights* are we are still as much at a loss to know as ever. That this *Argu-*

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ment will not of itself prove *Ordination* to be one of them is very evident, because that can be done only by producing such *Texts* as declare this to be one of the *Rights* and *Privileges* belonging to those then call'd by that *Name*. Whereas this *Plea* pretends to nothing but that *Presbyters* are call'd *Bishops* in the *New Testament*; from whence it can never follow that they are entitled to the *Powers* of *Those* who have been, since that time, call'd in a peculiar sense, *Bishops*. On the contrary, I have this *Argument* to urge. *Presbyters* have a title to those *Rights* only which were enjoyed by those *Church-Officers* who are call'd *Bishops*, or *Overseers*, in the *New Testament*. But the *Power of Ordination* was never allow'd to, or claim'd by those who are there call'd *Bishops*. Therefore, it is not one of those *Rights* to which *Presbyters* have a Title. The force of this *Argument* the *Author* I am now considering is so sensible of, that after all that He hath said on this Head, he thinks himself oblig'd to yield, p. 86. that it is not sufficient to shew that the same Persons were call'd *Presbyters* and *Bishops* at first; and that, if it can be made out that a *Superiority*, like to that of *Timothy* and *Titus*, was by *Divine Appointment* (I suppose He means by the will of the *Apostles*) to continue in the *Church*; or that the *Power of Ordination* was not convey'd

Chap. II. vey'd to those who were at first call'd Bishops, the Identity asserted will not support the Inference drawn from it. The former of these I hope I have not in vain attempted to prove in the foregoing Chapter, as well as to say something sufficient to make the latter appear much more probable than the contrary. But I must here remind this Author of three things, 1. That the Proof ought to lie on their side, who have gone out of a long *Established Course*, and pretended to exercise an *Original Right*, unheard of in former Ages of the Church. 2. That this Identity of Names will signify nothing, even supposing we could not prove their *Negative*, that the Power of Ordination was not in the Commission of the First Presbyters; which it is very unreasonable to require at our hands. For unless, on the other side, the *Positive* part can be prov'd that the Power of Ordination was actually in the Commission of those Presbyters who are likewise called Bishops in the New Testament, all this Plea must necessarily fall to the ground. And whether St. Paul dealt with the Presbyters of Ephesus, and Crete, as if he knew any thing of such a Commission, let any one judge. 3. Supposing such an *Original Right* granted them by their Commission, it doth not follow that Modern Private Presbyters can be justified in the Exercise of it, when by a solemn Act of their

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own, and upon just Reasons; their Prede- Chap. II
cessors throughout the *Christian* World un-
animously consented to debar themselves of
the *Exercise* of it, if we will believe the most
Learned and Zealous *Advocates* for the *Pres-*
byterian Cause.

For my own part, therefore, I grant to
this *Author* all that He contends for, when
He sums up the *Premises* from which He
draws his *Conclusion*, p. 87. I grant that the
Names of *Bishop* and *Presbyter* are used so
promiscuously in the *New Testament* as to leave
no distinction of *Office*. I know not how it
should be otherwise, when *Presbyters* were
called *Bishops*. I grant to Him that there are
as many *Bishops* in the first sense of the Word
as *Presbyters* in the most early Churches: for
every *Presbyter* was called *Bishop*, or *Over-*
seer: I grant that we can find in the *New Te-*
stament no *Presbyter* who was not a *Bishop*,
i. e. called by that Name. I grant that we
read not there of any *Consecration* of an *Eccle-*
siastical Officer called a *Bishop*, different from
the *Ordination* of a *Presbyter*, i. e. we read
not of any *Ordination* of *Presbyters* different
from the *Ordination* of those who were then
called *Bishops*, i. e. *Presbyters*. I grant the
Duties and *Qualifications* of those called *Bi-*
shops in the *New Testament*, and of those called
Presbyters, are the same, because they are
the *Duties* and *Qualifications* of the same
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Chap. II. Church-Officer called by both those Names,

I grant to him all these things, that is, indeed only one single Point thus variously expressed, viz. that *Presbyters* are those *Church-Officers* who are called *Bishops* in the *New Testament*. For any after all this to say that they who are called *Bishops*, and they who are called *Presbyters* in the *New Testament*, differed originally in the power of Ordination, or indeed in any single Circumstance, is in truth not only not to derive their Notions from Scripture, as this Author saith, but to speak absurdly, and inconsistently: For it is to say that the same Persons differed from themselves. But tho' I have granted to Him all this, yet I hope I may without Absurdity maintain, that the Powers of those who were called *Bishops* in the *New Testament*, were not the same with the Powers of those who were called so afterwards in an eminent Sense; or, in other Words, that those *Church-Officers* who are styled *Bishops* in the *New Testament* have never received, or exercised the Right of Ordaining others; but that this Right was always in the hands of Officers superior to them.

To conclude this Head, let us consider once more the Plea here advanced, and what is to be reply'd to it. The Argument, so much applauded by the afore said Author, is this, *Presbyters are by Divine Right the same*

Episcopal Ordination.

III

as *Bishops*; therefore they may warrantably Or- Chap. II
dain other *Presbyters*. His Proof of the former part of this Reasoning is drawn from hence, that *Presbyters* are the same with *Bishops* in the *New Testament*. So that the Argument is indeed this, *Presbyters* were called likewise *Bishops* in the first Days; therefore they may warrantably claim the *Right* of Ordination, which is acknowledged to be the *Right* of those who have been called *Bishops*, in a peculiar sense, in later Ages. The Answer is, that this will entitle them to no *Rights* but such as were enjoyed by those who are called *Bishops* in the *New Testament*. And again, supposing this *Right* of Ordination to belong originally to those who were called *Bishops* in the *Apostles* time, this will not prove that *Modern Presbyters* may warrantably exercise this *Right*, which according to themselves was universally, many Hundred Years ago, given up to another Rank of Men on good Grounds, and for just Reasons. So that here is a double Defect in this Argument: For granting that *Presbyters* were called *Bishops* by the *Apostles*, this will not entitle them to any *Rights* but what were enjoyed by those who were then called so. And granting to them an *Original Right* to ordain, this *Original Right*, considered by it self, will not warrant them in the Exercise of it, when it hath once been universally,

Chap. II. verſally, and upon wiſe Reaſons given up.

This *Author* muſt excuſe me if I wholly paſs over his *Authorities*, that is: if I do not receive his Reasoning, becauſe it is the ſame with that of many great Men. If He could produce *Thousands* of greater Names than He mentions, I ſee not of what Importance He himſelf could allow this to be, who hath even in the Caſe of a matter of *Fact*, rejected with contempt the *Testimony* of the moſt *Competent Witneſſes* we can have, and hath ſaid what is enough to reach any one not to be born down by *Great Names*, in a Matter which is in them purely *Opinion*, and depending upon their own Reasoning. The main *Argument* made uſe of by all that have appeared in the ſame *Cauſe*, is taken from the *Identity* of *Names*, which I have now examined, and have, I hope, evidently ſhewn, that there is nothing to be concluded from thence in favour of *Presbyterian Ordination*.

But tho' I have owned the main Point for which this *Author* produceth ſeveral *Texts* of the *New Testament*, viz. That *Presbyters* are there called *Bishops*, or *Overſeers*; ſtill denying that it follows from thence, that they had the Powers of thoſe who were afterwards called *Bishops* in an eminent ſenſe, or, which is all one, of ſuch Church-

Officers

Episcopal Ordination.

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Officers as Timothy and Titus in those very Chap. II.
Days: It is fit I should particularly consider
the Texts themselves, because He doth at
large reason from them to his own purpose,
and some may think it a blameable Neglect
to pass them over.

St. Paul writes to the Saints at Philippi,
with the Bishops and Deacons. I have no dis-
pute with Him here: but freely own that
the Officers called Bishops here, were Presby-
ters and Teachers; which is all He here ex-
pressly contends for. I shall only remind
Him, that his Business under this Head
should not have been to confute the odd
Notions of Dr. Hammond, who is hardly
followed in them by one Episcopal Divine of
any Consideration, but to have shewn, a-
gainst others who acknowledge that Presby-
ters are the Officers here meant, that it fol-
lows from their being then called Overseers
that they had the Powers of Ordination, &c.
entrusted to them. Nothing can follow
from hence, but that they had the Powers
of those who were then called Bishops.

It is urged that the same St. Paul in his
first Epistle to Timothy layeth down the Du-
ties and Qualifications of Bishops and Deacons,
without saying a word of Presbyters. I grant
the Conclusion He draws from hence, that
Presbyters are the Officers in the Church whom
He there calls Bishops; and that there were

Chap. II. *No Bishops, (that is, none called Bishops,) then distinct from Presbyters.* But I deny the Point in dispute, viz. That these, whom St. Paul here calls *Bishops*, had the Power of Ordination entrusted to them. The Name *Bishop*, or *Overseer* will not prove it: And there is a great deal against it to be collected from this Epistle. 1. This Author here acknowledgeth that the *Duties* of those then called *Bishops*, are here laid down by St. Paul, amongst which we do not find the least mention of *Ordination*; too material to have been omitted, if it had been their Province: From whence it may be probably collected that there was no such Power belonging to them. For tho' *Duties*, or *Powers* of less importance than those mention'd, might be omitted; yet it is not to be supposed, that *Powers*, or *Duties* of an higher sort should be disregarded. 2. It is not only not said, that those who are here called *Bishops* are entrusted with the Power of Ordination, but this very Power is, in this very Epistle, lodg'd in other hands, and entrusted to Officers who are acknowledged to be superior to those here called *Bishops*. What can be the reason of this? It must be, either because those *Presbyters* here called *Bishops* were never designed for this Office; or that these at *Ephesus* particularly were unfit for it. The latter of these two Suppositi-

ons cannot be true, as I know of: therefore the former must be acknowledged. That the Apostles should Ordain whom they please in all Churches is not strange. But that, supposing they designed the Presbyters for Ordained for the Ordaining of others in times to come, they should not only keep the affair of Ordination in their own hands for their Lifetime, but send other Churches Officers into places full of Presbyters already as fit for that Work as ~~well~~ they were likely to be, on purpose to Ordain others, is incredible, and not to be believed, unless there were a plain Declaration that affords such a Firmness Presbyters were to reassume the Exercise of their Right. Nay, Had these Presbyters been ever designed for the business of Ordination, the End of Timothy's being sent amongst them had most certainly been rather to direct them how to perform this Office, (as He was in other Cases to do,) than to take it out of their hands, and manage it as far as appears, wholly Himself. For we find not the least hint in St. Paul's Directions to Him on this Head, that Presbyters were to have the least hand in it, but sufficient Evidence that He was to be absolute, and uncontrolled in this matter. This answers the Difficulty here proposed by this Author, that supposing the Officer called Bishop here to be a Presbyter, then is the pro-

A brief Defense of

Chap. II. *per* Episcopal Function wholly overlooked in this Apostolical Directory: which is scarcely supposable, if it be so very needful in the Church as some have represented it. For, 1. If He mean that amongst the Duties and Qualifications of those here called Bishops, nothing is here mentioned by the Apostle which is properly Episcopal in our sense of the Word, I grant it to be true: But this will, according to his way of reasoning, only prove against himself, that no such were thought by the Apostle to belong to such as are here called Bishops. If He mean that nothing of the proper Episcopal Function is mentioned in this Epistle, I deny it. But indeed it is mentioned, which is very much to the disadvantage of his Cause, as belonging to Officers superior to the fixed Presbyters. The Trust of Ordination, and the Directions about it are given to Timothy, without an intimation of any such Office belonging to those Presbyters to whom He was sent to reside amongst them as long as his Presence was not more wanted in some other Church. Now it is to the Office of Timothy (whether fixed at Ephesus during Life, or not) that the Episcopal Function, for which we contend, answers. And therefore concerning the proper Episcopal Function, here is a great deal said in this Apostolical Directory. For it is not essential to a Bishop, that He should be fixed

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fixed at one *Place* during *Life*; but that He manage the affair of *Ordination*, and *Government*, over whatsoever *Church* He is placed, and for whatsoever space of *Time*. So that here is very good Proof from this very *Epistle*, that the affair of *Ordination* was always managed by Persons superior to *Presbyters*; and that *Presbyters* were not designed by the *Apostles* for that *Office*, notwithstanding that they are in it called *Bishops*, or *Overseers*. It is not therefore true, that two sorts of *Officers* only are mentioned in this *Epistle*. For *Timothy* is of the *third* sort, and He is mentioned; and as particular Directions given to *Him* to behave himself in his *Office*, as are given concerning *Presbyters* and *Deacons*.

3. It is alleged that the same *St. Paul*, in his *Epistle* to *Titus*, calls *Presbyters* by the Name of *Bishops*; which I readily grant, as likewise the *Conclusion* drawn from it by this *Author*, that *Bishops*, i. e. the *Officers* there so called, were not superior to *Presbyters*, because they were the *Presbyters* themselves. But still I am at a loss how this settles the Powers of those who were then called *Bishops*. I do not allege here merely a Community of Names. *Titus*, who answers in *Office* to our *Bishops*, is not called a *Bishop* here. It seems to be a Name pretty much at that time appropriated to those who were
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Chap. II. afterwards called *Presbyters*: And certainly those who were called by it at that time, were entitled to all the *Offices* belonging to those who were then called by it, *i. e.* to *Themselves*. I grant the same *Character* is given of all to whom that *Name* then belonged; and the same *Qualifications* required. Nay, to go on in the Words of this *Writer*, *All Episcopal Characters were required in them; All Episcopal Work required of them*; that is, *All the Characters* and all the *Work* belonging to those who are there called *Bishops*. For the *Argument* can prove no more. It can no more prove that they were called to the *Office* of those who were afterwards called *Bishops* in a peculiar sense, than it can be proved they were entitled to all the *Rights* now challenged by the *Bishops* of *Rome*. What those *Characters*, and what that *Work* is, must be judged from other *Arguments*. If we go to this *Epistle*, we find no intimation about their *Right* to *Ordain* others; but on the contrary, a *superior Officer* sent to *Crete*, notwithstanding that there were a sufficient number of well-qualified *Presbyters* there, on purpose to preside amongst them, and to *Ordain* others to the work of the *Ministry*. I need say no more on this Head, but refer the *Reader* to what I have just now said under the last. Only I can't help observing how free this *Author* is for calling for plain and

and *positive* Proof on the side of *Episcopal* Chap. II.
Ordination, whilst He cannot produce one
single plain, or *positive* Proof that *Presbyters*
were designed by the *Apostles* to *Ordain*,
unless He will esteem this a good Argu-
ment, Those who have been called *Bishops*,
since the *Apostles* days, have the power of
Ordination. Therefore Those who were
called *Bishops* in their Days had it, notwith-
standing they were hindered from the Ex-
ercise of it; and others were sent amongst
them, to do that Office, by the *Apostles* them-
selves.

4. This Author farther allegeth that Text,
Act. 20. 28. in which St. Paul exhorteth the
Presbyters of the *Ephesian Church* in these words,
Take heed unto your selves, and to all the Flock
of God, over which the Holy Ghost hath made
you Overseers, or *Bishops*. I acknowledge that
the Persons here spoken to were *Presbyters*,
now peculiarly so called; and that St. Paul
here calls them *Bishops*, or *Overseers*; which
Word is so far from deserving Censure
in our Translation, that it had been happy
if it had been always used in other Texts
instead of the word *Bishop*, which is the ve-
ry Greek word, and therefore cant be called
an Interpretation of it; and then having been
appropriated since to the Highest Ecclesiasti-
cal Officer, is apt to raise a false Idea in the
Minds of most Men, who are more led by

Chap. II. Words, than by the Reality of things. But what are we to collect from hence? 1. Suppose these *Presbyters* at *Ephesus* answered exactly to the *Presbyters* in our Days, *St. Paul* might justly have said the same things to them which we find here said; and exhorted them to take all possible Care of themselves, and their *Charges* even which the *Holy Ghost* had made them *Overseers*; in which Exhortation they must be very quick-sighted who can discover any thing of *Ordination*. And therefore it cannot be shewn from these words, that they were thought to have the power of *Ordination* any more than the *Presbyters* of the *Established Church* are thought to have it. 2. There is not only nothing in this *Text* to prove these *Presbyters* to have had the Power of *Ordination*, and the whole management of their *Churches* entrusted to them, but something in the manner of *St. Paul's* applying himself to them, which rather supposeth, and implies the contrary. For the *Flock* which these Persons were here exhorted to feed, was that in which the *Holy Ghost* had already made them *Overseers*, or *Bishops*; And this *Flock* was the Company of *Lay-Christians*, not the *Shepherds* themselves: And to feed the *Flock*, or the *Church*, was the Office of these particular Persons here concerned, which Expression is not used concerning Ordaining other *Presbyters*.

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byters, but guiding and instructing *Lay-Chri-Chap. III*
tians in the way to Heaven. This, there-
fore is St. Paul's advice to these *Presbyters*,
that they should take heed to themselves,
to their own Example and Behaviour in
their *Office*; and to the *Flock*, that is, to eve-
ry *Congregation* of *Lay-Christians*, the Care
of which had already been committed to
any of them, &c. Now, I argue, that if
these Persons had been designed for the
highest *Governours* in the *Church*, and for the
Ordaining of others, the *Charge* given to them
had not ended without *Directions*, and *In-*
structions, and *Exhortations* agreeable to these
important parts of their *Office*. But if St.
Paul, when He thought He was taking final
Leave of them, mentions no such *Offices* be-
longing to them, it is a very probable Ar-
gument that He knew of none such to which
they were called. What was committed
to them, He plainly tells them, *viz.* The
instructing and guiding the *Lay-Christians* in
their way to Heaven; not the *Ordaining* o-
ther Men to their own *Office*, which, being
a very great Trust, would not have been
passed over by Him, had He thought it be-
longed to these *Presbyters*. When He gives
his Charge to *Timothy*, it is in plain Words,
that He is to Govern, and Ordain *Presby-*
ters: When He gives his Charge to these
Presbyters, it is to feed the Flock of *Lay-*
Christians.

Chap. II. Christians. Let any one observe the Difference, and judge whether these *Presbyters* were ever designed for the same Offices for which *Timothy* had been set over them. That the business of Government and Ordination were not at this time committed to these *Presbyters*, is not only plain from the Expression used of feeding the Flock, which signifieth quite another thing, but also from hence that *Timothy* did both before, and after this, Govern, and Ordain, as his own peculiar Business, in this Church. That He Governed, and Ordained *Presbyters* there before this, this Author acknowledgeth, p. 81. where He saith it is evidently proved, that the first *Epistle* to *Timothy* was written before this meeting at *Miletus*. That *Timothy* was present at this time, He likewise thinks very probable, p. 79. From whence I argue that St. Paul having once by that *Epistle* put them under his Governance, and the affair of Ordination into his hands, if it had been his intent here to have committed all to the Care of these *Presbyters*, it had been highly necessary for him to have said so plainly, and to have declared to them, that whereas He had indeed confined them from the Exercise of their Right of Ordination, He now instated them in the full Exercise of that and all other matters of Church Government. But having before restrained them in these Points,

and

and now not expressly releasing them from Chap. II. that restraint, it seems far from probable that He commits the *Care* of the *Church* to them in any other sense but that in which they had it before, during the acknowledged *Residency* of *Timothy* amongst them. That *Timothy* did, after this, *Govern*, and *Ordain* at *Ephesus*, and not these *Presbyters*, is plain from *St. Paul's second Epistle to Him*: in which He is supposed in the same *Office* as in the *first*; and the like *Injunctions*, tho' in more general terms, repeated concerning his *Behaviour* in it. From whence I think it evident beyond all *Contradiction*, that *St. Paul* did not at this time once think of leaving the whole *Government*, and the matter of *Ordination*, in the hands of these *Presbyters*. For if that were here his *Design*, and *solemn Act* in this *Charge*, what *Occasion*, or what *Foundation* could there be for Him afterwards to take these *Rights* away again? And how various must his *Judgment*, and how unbecoming his *Behaviour* appear, to be perpetually thus changing, first giving to *Presbyters* the *Right* of *Ordination*, then immediately restraining it; then solemnly restoring to them the *Exercise* of it, when He was taking his final *Leave*, and afterwards putting the same restraint upon them again. This is incredible: And yet this must be supposed, if there be any thing implied in the

Chap. II. the Text now before us, to the purpose of the Presbyterian Cause.

P. 78.

But a great Difficulty is here started, and a great Argument drawn from *Timothy's* Presence at this time, and from *St. Paul's* not solemnly now making Him their *Fixed Bishop*, and giving Him the Care of the Church, and recommending Obedience to Him as such. Now, 1. The business of this *Author* is not to prove that *Timothy* was not a *Fixed Bishop* of *Ephesus*, but that the *Presbyters* of *Ephesus* had the Right of Ordination entrusted to them. Supposing *Timothy* were not now made *Fixed Bishop*, it will not follow that this Right belonged to the *Ephesian Presbyters*. 2. Supposing *Timothy* left them upon several Occasions, as He did now to accompany *St. Paul* to *Rome*, this did not necessarily dissolve his relation to them, whenever He should think fit to return. *St. Paul* had other, and sufficient Opportunities of declaring his Mind to *Timothy*: And the *Presbyters* knew his Will too well concerning Him, to neglect Him whenever He should come amongst them. *Timothy's* accompanying *St. Paul* to *Rome*, made it very necessary for Him to direct his Discourse to the *Presbyters*, to engage them to regard their Office of feeding their Flock in his absence. It is highly probable that it was *St. Paul's* Design, at this time, that He should return to

them

them again, because We find He did; and Chap. II.

as probable that both *He*, and *They* knew this. So that his being *absent* from them at *Times*, as the *Occasions* of the *Church* required, did not dissolve his relation to them. They seem, even after this, to have been his particular *Care*, whenever He could be with them, tho' *St. Paul's* *Occasions*, and the *Necessities* of *other* *Churches*, might often call for his help elsewhere. Had not the *Labours*, and *Assistances* of such worthy Persons been wanted at different Places, it is very probable they had been properly speaking *Fixed Bishops*. But their not being *Fixed*, is no Argument on the side of *Presbyters*, to entitle them to the *Right of Ordination*. Here, therefore, is a sufficient Account given of *St. Paul's* taking no express notice of *Timothy* at this meeting, because his Design in sending for the *Presbyters* was only to move them, as it were by his last Words, to a due *Care* in that Office of feeding the Flock that had been entrusted to them; especially because *Timothy* was now leaving them for some time. But We see that it doth not follow from hence that He gave the Office which *Timothy* formerly had into their hands; (for He afterwards exercised the same amongst them;) any more than it is true that they were empower'd to Ordain by Words

Chap. II. Words which imply no such thing in them. In fine, the Presbyters of Ephesus would have argued with less reason than any others, that they were called by St. Paul to the whole Care of the Church, and the Ordaining others, from his giving them the name of Bishops, or Overseers; because they could not but know that they were called by that Name, when a superior Officer was actually set over them to Govern, and Ordain. They were neither to Govern, nor Ordain, when Timothy was set over them to those purposes; yet they were then called Bishops, and that by St. Paul. Neither, therefore, doth it follow that they are here declared by St. Paul to be entrusted with these Rights, from their being here declared by Him to be Bishops, or Overseers of the Flock of Christ. From all which laid together it appears how void of all Foundation the Assertion of this Author is, that St. Paul doth in these words, *leave it to the Presbyters of Ephesus, to manage Ecclesiastical Affairs, and Ordination amongst the rest, as Occasion should offer, by common Consent amongst themselves, &c.* Whereas He exhorts them to nothing but the faithful Execution of the Office of those called Presbyters in a peculiar sense; and useth no Words that imply in them either the Right of Ordination, or of that

that Government which is claimed by Bi- Chap. II
shops, so called in an eminent sense.

5. It is alleged that St. Peter writing to P. 81.
the Presbyters styles himself their Fellow-
Presbyter (as St. John also doth) and exhorts
them to feed the flock of Christ, taking the o-
versight thereof willingly. 1 Pet. 5. 1, 2. But,
What follows from the former part of
this I cannot see, unless this Author have a
mind to prove that the Apostles by their Love
and Humility in calling themselves Fellow-
Labourers with those who were under them,
intended to equal those Presbyters in all Pow-
ers and Rights to themselves. If it prove
any thing to the purpose of this Author, it
must prove Presbyters to have been Apostles,
even whilst the Apostles were living, and ru-
led them. But it cannot prove this. Neither
therefore can it prove them to have enjoyed
any Powers but what Modern Presbyters en-
joy: to whom St. Peter might in condescen-
sion have used the same Words. He useth to
the Primitive Presbyters. 2. As to the latter
part of it, that He exhorts the Presbyters
to do the Office of Bishops, that
of those then called Bishops, or Overseers,
grant. But to say that it thence follows
that He commands them to Ordain, and Go-
vern, which are parts of the Duty of those
at that time called Bishops in a peculiar
sense, is manifestly to beg the Question. For
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Chap. II. the Question is not whether *Presbyters* were not called *Overseers* in those early Days: but what the Business of those, who were then called *Overseers*, was. So that the Argument is no better than this, *St. Peter* commands *Presbyters* to do the Office of those who were in his Days called *Bishops*, or *Overseers*; therefore He commands them to do the Office of those who were afterwards called *Bishops* in an eminent sense. Whereas the Point now in debate is, whether those Officers, who were then called *Bishops*, were called to the Office of *Ordaining*, &c. 3. What the Office of those was to whom *St. Peter* writes this, is plainly enough here expressed, *viz.* To feed the Flock in that Place where they were placed, *overseeing*, or looking after it, not as if they were driven to it by Force, but willingly, and gladly, &c. Now if any one else had discovered in these Words the Power of *Ordaining Presbyters*, what Triumphs might we have expected from this Author? The Flock of *Christ* is the Company of *Lay-Christians* distinct from the *Shepherds*; therefore this Direction, which wholly respects this Flock, can signify nothing but that it was the Duty of *Presbyters*, i. e. of those then called *Overseers*, to guide and instruct their Congregation with all Diligence and Faithfulness in the way to Happiness: Nor can it possibly be implied in this, that they had the Power

of Ordination, which respects the constituting Chap. II.
of *Shepherds* over other *Flocks*, not the *feeding*
that *Flock* over which they were them-
selves placed. Nay, the contrary is rather
imply'd, because *St. Peter* when He is giving
them advice to perform their *Office* as be-
comes them, mentions only the *feeding* of
that *Flock* which they were, before this, cal-
led to *oversee*, and take care of. From all
which it is evident that nothing can be col-
lected from this *Passage* in favour of *Presbyte-*
rian Ordination.

6. It is once more alleged that *St. Paul* P. 82
writing to *Timothy* gives him this *Charge*,
Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was
given thee by Prophecy, with the laying on of the
hands of the Presbytery, 1 Tim. 1. 14. I pass
over *St. Paul's* mentioning in another place
the *Imposition* of his own hands *only* on *Ti-*
mothy, 2 Tim. 1. 6. If the *Gift* in the latter
place may signify the *Holy Ghost*, why not
in the former? As indeed any one would
judge that this Word rather imports the
Extraordinary Qualifications given to *Timo-*
thy from above for the better *Execution*
of his *Office*, than the *Office* itself, to which it
doth not seem probable to me that He was
appointed by any besides *St. Paul* himself.
So that my first Answer is, that the *Ordi-*
nation of *Timothy*, or the *Appointment* of
Him to his peculiar *Office*, is not the thing

Chap. II. here spoken of : and consequently nothing can be collected from hence in favour of *Presbyterian Ordination*. But let it be granted, at present, that the Word signifieth the Office to which He was called; tho' it do not found to that purpose. Let it be granted that an *Assembly* (if this *Author* pleaseth) of such as were in those Days called *πρεσβυτεροι* made up the *πρεσβυτεριον* here spoken of. I assure Him, if, instead of this Word, the word *Episcopate* had been used, I should have been so far from triumphing (as He suspects) that I should have thought it something more to his purpose, than the Word here used. For, 1. The very highest *Church-Officers* called themselves *πρεσβυτεροι* in those Days, as He himself hath proved in the Page before; and therefore a *Company* of the *Highest Ecclesiastical Officers* may be here called *πρεσβυτεριον*, as He himself seems sensible, p. 83. Whereas I do not find that the most Eminent and Supreme *Church-Governours* were ever called *ἐπίσκοποι* in those Days, but the Word was generally given to a lower Degree. What He can collect from the highest *Church-Officers* acting as a *Presbytery*, (i. e. as a *Company* met together for this solemn purpose) in favour of a *lower order of Ministers*, since peculiarly called *Presbyters*, I cannot see. For it is impossible to argue, that some of the *Apostles* or *Evangelists* acted as a *Presbytery*,

Episcopal Ordination.

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Chap. II.

bytery, i. e. as a *Company* in the setting apart *Timothy* to his *Office*; therefore those whom *Timothy* was sent to govern had a *Right* to meet, and act as a *Presbytery* in *Ordaining* others. 2. If this *Text* prove any thing in favour of such a *Right*, it equally proves that *Presbyters* had a *Right* to set apart not only *Presbyters* to their *Office*, but even *Evangelists*, or such *Church-Officers* as *Timothy* was, to their *Office*: which is absurd. 3. Let any one judge whether it be in itself credible, that *Presbyters*, so called in a peculiar sense, should joyn in setting apart *Timothy* to his *Office*, which was to *Govern*, and *Ordain* Persons of the same Rank with themselves. 4. Supposing *Presbyters* peculiarly so called were in this *Company*, (which doth not appear at all,) and this were properly an *Ordination*, it will only follow from hence that they may assist (with *Officers* superior to themselves) at an *Ordination*; not that they may without any such *Officers* manage this *Affair*: which will be but of small advantage to the *Cause* this *Author* hath undertaken. 5. The same may be said with respect to that *Passage*, *Act. 13. 1, 2, 3.* if any should be so weak as to urge it, to prove that *Ordination* was part of the business of the *Ordinary Teachers* or *Presbyters* in the *Church*. For if this were the *Ordination* of *St. Paul*, it will follow from hence, not

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only

Chap. II. only that *Presbyters* have a *Right* of *Ordaining* *Presbyters*; but also that their *Office* was to *Ordain* even *Apostles* themselves, and to give them the *Authority* which they had in the *Church*: which is too absurd to need any *Confutation*. If it were not an *Ordination* properly so called, but only a joyning in *Prayer* for the *Grace* of *God* to accompany *St. Paul* and *Barnabas* in the particular *Work* they were going about, as this *Author* seems in another place to think, and as it is manifest from the *Context*, then He doth not well to urge this as an *Instance* of *Presbyterian Ordination*, as He seems to do, p. 111. or, (as He doth, p. 85.) to prove that the *Presbyters* might joyn in *Ordaining Timothy* to the *Office* of an *Evangelist*, and *Governour* in the *Church* of *Ephesus*, or other *Churches*. For it will only follow from that *Instance* (*Act. 13. 1.*) that *Presbyters* might joyn in invoking the *Grace* of *God* in a particular *Case* in which even an *Apostle* was to exercise an *Office* which He already had; not that they were ever called upon to joyn in the setting apart a *Superior Church-Officer* to an *Office* which He had not before. I doubt, if such *Arguments* as this be admitted in the *Case* of *Ordinations* properly so called, the like may be found for the *Right* of the *Christian Laity* to *Ordain*, since the *Brother whose Praise is in*
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the Gospel is said to be χειροτονθεῖς ὑπὸ τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν, to a peculiar Work, in which Words the *Laity* must needs be included, tho not *solely* here meant. The Truth of the Matter is, that not only *Presbyters*, but all *Christians* may very well joyn in Praying, and setting about Persons to one peculiar Work for which they had sufficient *Powers*, and *Authority* before; and yet have no *Right* to confer the first *Authority* on these very Persons. So that if *Timothy* were an *Evangelist* before, the *Parallel* holds: If not, the *Instance* alleged cannot prove any thing. And if He were, then this was not his *Ordination*; nor can any thing be inferr'd from it in favour of the *Right* of *Presbyters* to *Ordain*. But what need of any more Words, when this *Author* himself hath acknowledged that *πρεσβυτεῖον* may signify a *Company* of the *Highest Church-Officers*? How then can this be esteem'd any *plain*, or *positive* Proof (which this *Writer* so often speaks of in this *Cause*) of the *Right* of *Presbyters* to *Ordain*? If Mr. *Daille* could discover in this *Text* the whole method of *Presbyterian Ordination*, according to this *Author's* Quotation, I think He might have spared his *Satyr* upon Dr. *Hammond's* quick-sightedness, and have kept the *Glory* of *Prejudice*, and great *Discoveries* to himself.

A brief Defense of

Thus have I considered all the *Text* alleged by this *Author* under his first *Plea* for the *Right of Presbyters to Ordain*: and have, I hope, effectually shewn that there is not one of them which proves, either that they who were in the *New Testament* called *Bishops*, or *Overseers*, were called to the *Office of Ordaining* others, or that any *Church-Officers* which answered to those since peculiarly called *Presbyters*, ever so much as assisted at an *Ordination*; much less, were the sole *Managers* of that *Affair*. It appears to have been always in the hands of *Officers* superior to those called at that time *Evangelists*.

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In answer therefore to his first *Plea*, I have shewn these two things, 1. That supposing *Presbyters* to be the *Officers* in the *New Testament* called *Bishops*, which is the Foundation of this first *Plea*, it doth not at all follow that they were invested with this *Right*, because it doth not at all appear that those who are there called *Bishops*, were ever thought to have any thing to do with it. And, 2. That supposing the *Officers* there called *Bishops* were empower'd to *Ordain*, this alone will not justify a few particular *Presbyters* in their actual *Execution* of that *Power*, after it hath by *Universal Consent*, been given up, upon good *Reasons*, to other *Persons*; and settled by long and immemorial *Custom*.

Custom in other hands: which, I hope, may be thought sufficient in answer to this first *Plea.* Chap. II.

Sect. 2. *The Plea taken from the Commission given to Presbyters, examined.*

The *Second Plea* made use of, by the *Author* I am now considering, in favour of the *Right* of *Presbyters* to *Ordain*, is taken from their *Commission*: And the *Argument* founded upon this, is thus drawn up by *Himself*, p. 91. *Presbyters* are by virtue of their Office empower'd to *Ordain*: and therefore, their *Ordinations*, when managed piously, and prudently, cannot be null, or invalid, or unacceptable to *God*.

The *Connexion* here, He saith, cannot be contested: For if the Power of *Ordination* belong to the Office of a *Presbyter*, the Exercise of that Power cannot be called in question as a Nullity. But, with Submission, I think the *Connexion* may very justly be contested, even upon his own Principles. For supposing all *Presbyters* to have been originally empower'd to *Ordain*; yet if they were left with a liberty either of Exercising this *Right* themselves, or of fixing it in the hands of single Persons appointed to preside, and govern amongst them, (as this *Author* acknowledgeth) and they themselves have thought best, and most

Chap. II. for the good of the Church, to introduce this *first Presidency* amongst themselves; and to confine the *Exercise* of this *Power of Ordination* to the *Fixed Presidents* by *Universal Consent*; then, I say, it will not be a sufficient *Justification* of the *Ordinations* of any particular *Presbyters* to allege, that they *have originally the Right to Ordain*: for that will not prove, in this *Case*, that they may, acceptably to God, exercise it whenever they see fit. There must be other *Reasons* to justify this, drawn from the *Exigencies* and *Necessities* of the *Church*: by which alone this can be defended. Just as it is in the *Case of Civil Government*. Supposing every *Member* of the *Senate* in a mere *Commonwealth* had *originally* the *Power of granting Commissions* to some sort of *Officers*: but should all agree to devolve this *Power* upon one single *Person*, whether called *King*, or *Protector*, or *Stadtholder*; from this time all *Commissions* must be given in his *Name*; and it must be unjustifiable in any *Members* of this *Senate* to act in opposition to *Him*, and give *Commissions* in their own *Right*, notwithstanding that *original Right* which they might pretend to. Supposing, therefore, that He can prove the *original Names* of *Presbyters* to *Ordain*, yet we see the *Exercise* of it may be *invalid*, and *unacceptable* to God. But as we find his *Conclusion* far from certain, and

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Indisputable, even granting the Truth of his *Premises*; so we shall, I am persuaded, upon Examination, find the *Affertions* upon which He builds this Conclusion, void of all such Evidence and Proof as He would gladly suppose it to have. Chap. II.]

In proof of the *original Right* of *Presbyters* to *Ordain*, this *Author* appeals to the grand *Ministerial Commission*, Matth. 28. 19, 20. Go ye, and teach all Nations, Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. And lo, I am with you always to the End of the World. From hence he argues thus. Either this Commission doth empower the Apostles to ordain Successors in the Sacred Ministry, or it doth not. If it do not, it is an imperfect Commission, and insufficient for the Continuation of a Gospel-Ministry to the End of the World, according to the Promise annexed. If it did empower the Apostles to Ordain, (as without doubt it must) then the Ordaining Power must be comprehended under Discipling, and Baptizing, and Teaching to observe whatever He had commanded. And the same Power must be convey'd together with the Ministerial Office, to all whom they invested in this Office by virtue of this Commission. Again, So that if this Commission warranted the Apostles to ordain others to succeed them in the standing work of the Ministry;

Chap. II. nistry; and warrants Bishops to ordain other Ministers, it warrants Presbyters also by virtue of their Office to do the like, p. 92, 93. This is the summ of his *Argument* in his own Words, the Force of which I shall now endeavour to examine: premising only that I hope he will not expect that I should be led by *Authorities* of *Modern Authors*, (when he himself hath so often declared against it) in a matter of *Mere Judgment*, and *Reasoning*; or yield to *Great Names*, without considering the Grounds upon which their *Assertions* are built. To the *Argument* now proposed, I have many things to reply which seem worthy of *Consideration*.

1. Supposing, what this *Author* contends for, that this was the *Commission* by which the *Apostles* were empower'd to *Ordain* others to succeed them in their *Ministry*; it will not follow that all whom they appointed to an *Ecclesiastical Office*, were appointed to all the *Offices* which he supposeth to be included in the Words here used. The utmost of what he can contend to be meant, here is, that our *Saviour* commissioned his *Apostles* to go forth into the World, to endeavour, by themselves, and others whom they should appoint, to convince Men that *He* was the *Messiah* sent of *God*; to *Baptize* those who should believe in him as such; and then to teach all such Persons fully, and completely

the Conditions of his *Institution*: And the *Chap. II.*
utmost of what can be included in this *Com-*
mission is this, that the *Apostles* were re-
quired to take Care both by themselves, and
others whom they were to appoint, that the
Will of *Christ* should be performed in these
several Instances: Well then; What can be
collected from hence? Is it not fairly left to
the *Apostles* themselves (who were after-
wards to be endowed with the *Holy Ghost*
from above) to call Persons to which of
these *Offices* they should see fit? Might not
they completely answer this their Trust,
supposing they appointed some Persons to
Baptize, and not to *Teach*; others to *Teach*,
and not to *Ordain*; others to *Ordain*, and
Teach? And is it not evident that the *Com-*
mission of *others* was to be judged of by what
the *Apostles* thought fit to entrust to them,
not by what our *Saviour* thought fit to en-
trust to the *Apostles* themselves? The *first*
Answer therefore, is this, that supposing this
the full *Commission* of the *Apostles*, it appears
they might fulfill it, and all the *Ends* of it
might be answer'd, by their appointing dif-
ferent *Orders* for different *Offices* in the *Church*;
and therefore that it doth not follow that
they must have given the same Powers to
all whom they *Ordained*, which *Christ* gave
to them in these Words: Nor doth it fol-
low that this is the *Commission* of *Presbyters*

Chap. II. in such sense as that they are empower'd by it to *Ordain* others, because the *Apostles* were. And indeed this is the *Point* which this *Author*, instead of proving, takes for granted, viz. That this is a *Commission* to *Presbyters* to *Ordain*, because it was so to the *Apostles*: Whereas there is no *Consequence* in this *Argument*. This may be the *Original Commission* by which *Christ* declared to the *Apostles*, that it was his *Will* that *Disciples* should be *made, baptized, and instructed*, and consequently that there should be *Officers* in the *Church* for all these purposes: But it doth not at all follow from hence that it was his *Will* that every one who should be appointed to *Teach*: should likewise be empower'd to appoint others to *Teach*: nor is it in the least imply'd in these Words. This is the thing to be prov'd, that this is in such sense the *Commission* of all *Teachers*, as to *commission* them to be *Ordainers* of others likewise. Granting therefore that the *Apostles* by this *Commission* were empower'd to *Ordain* Persons to the several *Offices* here mentioned; I see not the *Justness* of the *Inference* this *Writer* draws from hence, viz. That they also whom by virtue of this *Commission* they fix in the *Ministry*, were by the same *Commission* empower'd to *Ordain* others also: Because by virtue of this very *Commission* the *Apostles* might have appointed some Persons only to *Teach*.

Teach *Christ*

Teach, without any other Powers; and o- Chap. II.

thers to *Baptize*; and others to *Ordain*; and so have as fully answered the Intent of it, as if they had appointed one sort of *Officers* to do every one of these *Offices*. And surely this Author will not say, that it was absolutely necessary to the fulfilling this *Commission*, that the *Apostles* should give the Power of *Ordaining* to all to whom they gave *Commission* to *teach*. Nor can it be said, that the Office of *Ordaining* doth so belong to that of *Teaching*, as to be inseparable from it, any more than the Privilege of being free from the Government of *Superior Officers*. If therefore, it do not result from the Nature of the thing, or the Words here used, that the *Apostles* were oblig'd to give to all *Teachers* the Power of *Ordination*; then must we enquire into the future Behaviour of the *Apostles*, to know what *Officers* they constituted, and what Powers they granted to them: And I have sufficiently proved, in the Answer to the foregoing *Plea*, that there is no Reason from any *Rule* laid down, or any Example mention'd in the *New Testament*, to think that the Power of *Ordination* was given to those *Officers* (called *Bishops*, or *Overseers* here) which answered to our *Presbyters*, notwithstanding that they were called to *teach* Christians, and to *feed the Flock* of Christ. It is of small Importance to urge
(as

Chap. II. (as this Author doth) that as for those Officers that were to continue to the End of the World, this Commission makes no difference and that whomsoever it empowers to Baptize and Teach, it equally empowers to discharge all other parts of the Ministerial Function which were designed to continue in the Church. I say this is of small Importance, since this Commission, as I have already said, did not oblige the Apostles to grant all Powers to all Teachers in the Church; and since He hath advanced no Proof, that this is the Commission of Presbyters in any other sense, than as it is the Original Declaration of Christ that there should be Teachers in the Church or as the Apostles were certainly commanded, and empower'd by it to see that there should be Officers for these purposes in the Church: But tho' the Apostles were thus empower'd, it doth not follow that every Officer they appointed in the Church was thus empower'd. And again, tho' this Commission makes no exprefs Difference, that is, tho' it doth not say, that He who is called to teach in the Church, shall not be called to Ordain likewise; yet it doth not follow that every one who is called to Teach, is therefore called to Ordain. Notwithstanding that no difference of Officers is here made in Words, the Apostles were left to their own Judgment and the Guidance of the Holy Spirit, whether

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there should be a distinction of *Officers* in Chap. II. the Church, or not: And consequently whether one sort, or more, were appointed by them for the *Offices* designed to continue in the Church, must be collected from their succeeding Behaviour. Again, It may as well be proved from hence, that all Ecclesiastical Teachers had in the first Age the Powers of *Apostles*, as that they have since the Powers of *Bishops* properly so called. For here is no difference made as to *Offices* at all: And therefore if this be the *Commission* both of the *Apostles*, and of the *Presbyters* whom they ordained, in the same sense; then had those *Presbyters* the same Powers which the *Apostles* had. If not in the same sense, then the Power of Ordination may be excepted as well as any other Power, for any thing that here appears to the contrary. If this be not the full *Commission* of the *Apostles*, then might they, notwithstanding this, have another *Commission*, together with the guidance of the *Holy Ghost*, for the assigning, or not assigning distinct *Offices* to distinct *Works* in the *Christian Church*, as should seem best. The result of what I have contended for under this first *Reply* is, that this may be the *Commission* to the *Apostles* to ordain *Successors* in the *Sacred Ministry*, and yet not oblige them to Ordain all to all *Offices*; and consequently that they might afterwards make a distinction

Chap. II. stinction of Officers notwithstanding this Commission: that this might be a sufficient Commission for the Continuation of a Gospel-Ministry to the End of the World, and yet that distinct Officers might be appointed for the distinct Offices here mentioned: that Ordination might be comprehended under Discipling, and Baptizing, and Teaching, i. e. that the Apostles might be commissioned in these words to take Care that there should be Officers in the Church to ordain Persons to all these Offices, and yet it need not be imply'd in these words, that all Officers whom they should call to teach, should be called likewise to ordain others to teach. In one word, granting his Premises, I can see no Foundation for the Conclusion He draws from them: nor hath He himself advanced any thing but his own Affirmations in proof of it.

2. That this was a Commission given to the Apostles, and designed to signify what their main Business in the World was to be, I freely grant: but that it was designed either as their full Commission, or as a full Declaration of the Methods they were to take in the Execution of their Commission, I see not the least ground to think. During our Lord's Life they were instructed by Himself how to behave themselves in the Office to which He had called them. When He was going to be taken from them, He tells them indeed

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what their main Business was to be in the World: But He not only doth this, but gives them a Promise of sending the *Holy Ghost* to guide and direct them in the management of their great Office. This *Commission* therefore may be a Declaration, in general, what their Business was to be: but not so particular as that they might not afterwards have fuller Declarations concerning the same: And this *Commission* itself not confining them to any one particular Method of executing it, they might afterwards be directed in their Choice of the best Method, since they are not commanded in this either to make, or not to make, a distinction in *Ecclesiastical Officers*. So that it is no such Absurdity as this *Author* would represent it, to suppose that this *Commission* was not properly their full and perfect *Commission*; since they might have full and sufficient *Commissions* from the *Holy Spirit* afterwards, without any reflexion upon our Lord, who sent this *Spirit* to supply his own place: or to affirm, that the *Apostles* themselves were not directed in these words to *Ordain* others; since they might have afterwards sufficient, and express *Directions* for this purpose from the *Holy Ghost*. The Words, therefore, now before us may be fully sufficient to the purpose intended by our Lord, viz. the Declaration of the Nature of their

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Office

Chap. II. Office in general; and yet their particular Direction, and Commission to Ordain other Ministers might be given them afterwards by the Holy Spirit. Particularly I do not see how this could be the Commission by which St. Paul Ordained Presbyters: nor consequently how the Presbyters whom He Ordained could plead this Commission for their Right to Ordain. If therefore it be not at all necessary to suppose that this is the Commission even of the Apostles themselves to Ordain; (which is the only ground of the present Plea;) this at once destroys the Argument for Presbyterian Ordination taken from this Commission.

3. Either the Apostles might afterwards make a distinction in Ecclesiastical Officers, notwithstanding this Commission, or not. If they might, then this Commission signifieth nothing to prove that all who are called to Teach, are called likewise to Ordain; and consequently, if this be granted to be the Commission of all Presbyters, it may be a Commission to them only to Teach, and Baptize, and not likewise to Ordain. If they might not; then neither was it left to them to debar the first Presbyters from Ordination, or to appoint Timothy, and such superior Officers to that work. For if it was our Lord's declared Will (as this Author contends) that the same Persons that should be called to

Teach,

Teach, should also be called to *Ordain*; how could the *Apostles* justify their debarring those whom they called to *teach*, from *Ordination*; or what Reasons can possibly be found out for such a Procedure? But it is manifest that they did debar the first *Presbyters* from *Ordination*, and appoint other *Officers* for that *Office*. From whence it appears to me to follow that they might notwithstanding this *Commission*, appoint that some *Officers* should be called, in future Ages, to *teach* in the *Church*; and others, distinct from these, to *Ordain*, as well as to *Teach*. So that granting this to be a *Commission* both with respect to *Teaching* and *Ordaining* in the *Church*, yet it may be a *Commission* to some to *Teach*; and to others, distinct from these, to *Ordain* as well as *Teach*. But

4. Supposing it to be a *Commission* by which the same Persons were invested with the *Right* both of *Teaching* and *Ordaining*, yet if the *Apostles* afterwards thought fit to restrain the Exercise of this latter *Right*, and to signify their Will that the *Ordinary Presbyters* and *Teachers* should not put it in Execution; it cannot justify any *Presbyters* in their *Ordinations* to allege this *Commission*: as this *Author* grants in another place, p. 86. where He in effect acknowledges that if it can be proved that the *Superiority* of such *Officers* as *Timothy* and *Titus* was designed to continue,

Chap. II. this will be sufficient for the *distinction* of Officers now contended for. I see not the least reason indeed from any thing in the *New Testament*, that any such *Right* was ever supposed by the *Apostles* originally to belong to *Presbyters*, or to Persons there called *Bishops*. I appeal to any one, whether the best Judgment we can pass in this Case, ought not to be founded upon their manifest Behaviour, when there were *Numbers* both of *Lay* and *Presbyters* in the Church; and whether it be not a good Argument that *St. Paul* knew nothing of such a *Right* belonging to *Presbyters*, that He appointed *superior Officers* to *Ordain* in places where there was a *Number* of *Presbyters* already settled. But if any chuse rather to say, that the appointing such Officers was only a *Suspension* of the *Exercise* of that *Right* in *Presbyters*; not a denying them the *Right* itself; I only desire to know of what *Significancy* this *Commission* is to empower *Presbyters* to *Ordain*, if the *Apostles* immediately debarr'd them from the *Exercise* of their *Power*, and might have debarr'd them from it, (as this *Author* in effect acknowledgeth, and no one can deny) thro' all Ages of the Church. For this will amount to the same thing, as if our Lord had given them, in these words, no *Right* at all to this Office. Either therefore this *Commission* gives to *Presbyters* an uncontrollable *Right* to *Ordain*,

or only a *Right* the *Exercise* whereof might afterwards be controlled and restrained. Not an *uncontrollable Right*, because we find the *Apostles* did immediately controul, and restrain the *Exercise* of it by appointing a *superior* sort of *Church-Officers* to manage the affair of *Ordination* in places where there were already a sufficient number of *Presbyters*. And if only a *Right*, the *Exercise* whereof might be controlled and restrained; this will be of no more Importance than *No Right* at all. For then our only *Enquiry* will be, whether the *Apostles* thought fit that *Presbyters* should ever *exercise* this *Right* or not; and if it appear they did not, this *Original Right* will, by their own acknowledgment, signify no more than if they had had no such *Right* at all. So that they must have recourse to other *Arguments*, distinct from this *Commission*, to justify themselves, *viz.* to such as prove that it was the *Apostles* Will that the *Presbyters* of succeeding Ages should exercise this *Power of Ordination*, tho' it be manifest beyond all Contradiction that they denied it to great numbers of *Presbyters* of their own Age, and very probable from thence that they did so to *all* of the same Order. But if any should say, that the *Exercise* of this *Power* might be restrained by the *Apostles* for a time, notwithstanding this *Commission*, tho' it could not *for ever*; it is natural to en-

quire on what Grounds this is said: since it is manifest that there is nothing in this *Commission* which gives a License to the *Apostles* to restrain *Presbyters* from *Ordaining* for a time, any more than for ever; and that there could be no peculiar Reason for them to restrain the *Presbyters* of their own Age from it, unless it be that they were certainly fitter for the work than the *Presbyters* of many of succeeding Ages were like to be. So that granting this to be a *Commission* empowering *Presbyters* not only to Teach, but to Ordain; yet it being given with such Limitations that the *Apostles* might afterwards debar them from the Exercise of their Power of Ordination; this *Commission* itself can signify nothing, unless it be likewise shewn that it was the *Apostles* Will afterwards that *Presbyters* exercise this Right. All the Scripture-proof for this hath been fairly examined under the former Plea; and no Intimation of any such Will of the *Apostles* found in their Writings, but a great deal to the contrary: as in the former Chapter several Arguments have been advanced to the contrary, and defended from the Objections made against them.

5. The *Commission* of *Presbyters* is sufficiently known from the Will of the *Apostles* declared about them, without having recourse to the Declaration made by Christ himself concerning the Business of the *Apostles*,

stles, and Church-Officers in general, thro' all Chap. II.

Ages of the Church: as the full Commission of the *Apostles* themselves was made known to them by the *Holy Ghost*, and immediate Inspiration, after our *Lord's* Death. It was not in the least necessary that our *Lord* should declare his whole Will in these points, since the *Holy Ghost* was afterwards to be sent, in order to give his *Apostles* all necessary Directions: And it is in every respect as much for the good of the *Christian Church*, that the *Apostles* should declare the Commission of *Presbyters*, as that our *Lord* himself should. And if we have recourse to the *Apostolical Writings*, all that we can find positively declared concerning them is, that their Commission is to teach the *Christian Church*, or to feed the flock of *Christ*; and we can draw a negative Argument from the no mention of any such part of their Office, and from the appointment of other Officers for that Work, that the Right of Ordination was not in their Commission.

6. It peculiarly becomes this Author, who hath so often spoken of plain, and positive proof from Scripture, to consider whether this Commission to which He appeals, come up to that Character, or not. The word Ordination is not mention'd in it: Nor is this given to the *Apostles* as a Commission to be given to all Teachers: Nor is it either said, or im-

ply'd in it, that all who are called to *Teach*, or *Baptize*, are likewise called to *Ordain* others to those *Offices*. That a great number of *Modern Divines* have taken this for the only *Commission* by which *Presbyters* act their part in the *Church*, is no Argument that it is truly so; and supposing it to be so, it doth not follow that *Ordination* is part of their *Office*, because this may be their *Commission* to *Teach* without commissioning them to *Ordain*: And yet these two things are the main Supports of this present *Plea*.

7. I hope this *Author* will excuse me from regarding what He alleges from the *Jewish Church*, whilst He himself puts the whole upon the Authority of the *New Testament*; whilst He himself at the same time discards the like Arguments, when used against an Opinion of his own; and neglects the Affirmation of *St. Jerome* Himself, the great *Patron* of *Presbyters*, who, in the same *Epistle* in which He maintains their *Cause*, styles the distinction between *Bishops* and *Presbyters* (peculiarly so called) an *Apostolical Tradition*; and affirms it to have been taken from the *Old Testament*, and to answer to the distinction between *Aaron*, and his *Sons*: as He doth likewise in another place. This, I suppose, will not be allow'd of: And yet if the first *Founders* of the *Christian Religion* thought

thought fit to make any thing in their Re-Chap. II.
ligion, or the *Appendages* of it, to correspond
to some things in the *Jewish*, I appeal to all
Persons, whether it be not most *probable* in
itself, that they should order this *Corres-*
pondence to relate to those *Circumstances* of
it which were appointed by *God*, and re-
corded in the *Old Testament*, than to such as
were determined by *Humane Prudence* after
wards. However true the Matter here af-
firmed by this *Author* may be, of the Just-
ness of which I do not here make my self a
Judge; this is certain, that it no more results
from a Person's being *Ordain'd* himself to
Teach, that He is empower'd to *Ordain* o-
thers to the same *Office*, than it doth from a
Person's being empower'd to act the part of
a *Justice of Peace*, that He is thereby em-
power'd not only to do the *Office* of a *Justice*
himself, but also to give the same *Commis-*
sion to others: no more than it results from a
Person's being *Baptized*, that He is empow-
er'd thereby to *Baptize* others. And, there-
fore, supposing that the *Jewish Teachers* were
always allowed to *Ordain* others to the *Of-*
fice of a *Teacher*, it doth not in the least fol-
low that it must be so in the *Christian Church*,
because it is at least full as much for the
Interest, and Honour of the *Christian Insti-*
tution, that *Ordination* should be in hands
distinct from the *Ordinary Teachers* of the
Church.

Chap. II. Church. Nay, I will add, more so, as ap-
 pears from the Behaviour of the whole Body
 of *Ancient Presbyters*, who found themselves
 (according to the greatest Modern Patrons
 of their Cause) obliged in Prudence to re-
 strain their own Exercise of this Right of
 Ordination, and to lodge it in the hands of a
 superior degree of Church-Officers. Besides, the
 way by which any Light hath been given
 by such Arguments as this hath not been by
 saying that there was such a Custom, or such
 an Office in the Jewish Church, therefore there
 must be something answering to this in the
 Christian Church: but by shewing that there
 are actually in the New Testament Expressi-
 ons about Customs, or Officers, which may
 very well be explained so as to correspond
 to such or such particular parts of the
 Jewish Constitution. Whereas under this,
 and the foregoing Plea, I have shewn that
 there is none, amongst all the Passages al-
 leged in favour of Presbyterian Ordination,
 which implies in it any such Right in Teach-
 ers, but several which do the contrary: and
 therefore this Argument can have no force;
 because there is no Power in the Christian
 Presbyters, spoken of in the New Testament,
 which can correspond to the Power He here
 supposeth to have been in the Jewish Teach-
 ers.

8. If our Lord himself, in the Words we Chap. II.
are now considering, empowers *Presbyters* to
Ordain, some *Questions* naturally offer them-
selves.

1. How came they, in several *Churches*, to
be restrained by the *Apostles* themselves; and
denied the *Exercise* of this *Right* immedi-
ately after their *Commission* was given them;
and this without any *Apology* for so doing;
without any acknowledgement that this
Right did originally belong to them; with-
out any Declaration that it was only for pre-
sent *Expediency*, and for prudent *Considera-*
tions suspended for a season; but that the
Exercise of it should be restored again to them
very soon? Why do we meet with nothing
like this? And why do we find the first
Presbyters dealt with by St. Paul, exactly as
He would have dealt with them, had they
not had originally the *Right* of *Ordination*?
To this *Question* I find no Answer attempt-
ed: nor can I think of any that can be re-
turned.

2. If this *Restraint* were designed to be
taken off, after the Death of the *Apostles*,
and such *Officers* as *Timothy*, and *Titus*: how
comes it that in all the Accounts of the *Pri-*
mitive Church we read of single *Persons* suc-
ceeding them in their *Stations*, and *Offices*?
How

Chap. II. How comes it that immediately upon their Deaths, we find the same *Restraint*, and the same *Distinction* spoken of with so much Zeal in *Ignatius's Epistles*?

3. If this *Restraint* were design'd to be taken off after the Death of the *Apostles*; and accordingly removed; (as our *Adversaries* contend;) how, and when was it imposed again upon them? Which is the intermediate time in which they did exercise this *Right of Ordination*? Which is the time when the *Restraint* was laid upon them again? And how comes it that their *Ordinations* were always disapproved, and condemned, and their *Right* to this *Work* always denied?

This last *Question* this *Author* seems so much aware of as to be willing to add something under this *Head* sufficient, either to prevent, or answer it: which I must therefore consider, because it is almost the whole of what He pretends to allege for his Cause out of the *Records of Ecclesiastical Antiquity*.

First, He saith that in some parts of the *Christian Church* it is not very difficult to fix the time of this *Restraint* upon *Presbyters*. The only Instance He produceth is that of the *Church of Alexandria*, in which He saith *St. Jerome* tells us that for above Two Hundred

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shop. From whence He argues that if Presbyters in this Church of Alexandria invested, and conferr'd Power, and Authority on their Bishop, and the Validity of this Act of theirs remained unquestionable, much more might they confer Orders on Presbyters: And, lest there should not appear Reason enough in the Argument itself, He adds that this Argument Mr. Baxter often tells us was esteemed unanswerable by as great a Man as Arch-Bishop Usher, p. 100. I have often told this Author how little I am moved with great Names in matters of Judgment; nor will He, I well know, yield to the force of every Argument (in other Points) which Arch-Bishop Usher thought unanswerable: And therefore I hope he will give me leave freely to examine the force of this Argument. For I am so far from thinking it unanswerable, that I cannot help thinking it will be found to prove the very contrary to the design of this Author in alleging it. For,

1. Either this Bishop whom the Presbyters of Alexandria constituted from the very time of St. Mark the Evangelist to the time of Heraclas and Dionysius, was no more than a Prime-Presbyter, or President of the Council of St. Presbyters; or He was a Bishop in the peculiar sense of the Word. If He were no more than a Prime-Presbyter, it will not follow that

Chap. II. that because they chose their own *President*, therefore *much more* they might *Ordain* other *Presbyters*, which is the Argument here used. For it is a much less thing for Persons of the same *Office* met together to chuse one of themselves to *preside* amongst themselves, for the better management of their *Joynt-Counsels*, than to call other *Persons* to their own *Office*, in which they had no part before. But if He were a *Bishop* in the peculiar sense of the Word (as I doubt not St. Jerome meant, and this Argument supposeth) then here is Demonstration of the distinction between *Bishops* and *Presbyters* from the very Days of the *Apostles*.

2. This very chusing themselves a *Bishop* is so far from proving that they were not under *Restraint* in the point of *Ordination*, that it is the very putting themselves under that *Restraint*: as a *Peoples* chusing any Person, from amongst Themselves, to be their *King*, *restrains* that *Right*, which was originally in them, of granting *Commissions* of lesser importance; and is designed to devolve the Power of doing this upon this single Person: so far is it from proving that they themselves continue to exercise it. And, according to St. Jerome, the *Presbyters* chusing and setting a *Bishop* over themselves, is the thing which put a Period to their *Ruling* the Churches in common, and with a proper

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Episcopal Ordination.

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Chap. II.

Equality: And from the very time of their doing this, they must, according to Him, be under *Restraints*. So that instead of arguing, the *Presbyters* chose their *Bishop*, a superior *Officer*; therefore much more *Ordained Presbyters*: I argue, the *Presbyters* of *Alexandria* chose to themselves *Bishops* from the very time of the *Apostles*; therefore from that time they were restrained from *Ordaining* other *Presbyters*, supposing they had an *Original Right* to that Work. For what, I pray, is that *Restraint* which *Blondel*, and this *Author* contend that the *Presbyters* voluntarily put themselves under, near the middle of the *Second Century*; but what resulted from their chusing, from amongst themselves, *Governours* whom they called *Bishops*? And what is that *Restraint* which *St. Jerome* speaks of, but the very *Order* that one should be chosen from among the *Presbyters*, to whom the *Care* of the *Church* should be in a peculiar sense committed? Nay, supposing this Person, chosen by them, to have been only a *Prime-Presbyter*, what I am saying is so evident that *Blondel* himself acknowledges such a *Restraint* upon the *Presbyters* by their choice of a *Prime-Presbyter*, as that nothing was afterwards to be done, in which He was not to bear a principal part. And *St. Jerome's* only Design being to point out the occasion of that Distinction between *Bishops*,

Chap. II. *shops* and *Presbyters*, which prevailed in his Days, and on which the *Restraint* put upon *Presbyters*, according to Him, was settled in the *Church*; to be sure He could mean nothing in these Words less than to prove that this *Restraint* was in the *Church* of *Alexandria* from the time of *St. Mark*, by shewing that from that time the *Presbyters* of that *Church* had chosen *Bishops*, and placed them over themselves. For the Sentence going before is to this purpose, that tho' in his Opinion the Original Design was that *Presbyters* should govern by their *Presbyteries*; yet that afterwards one was chosen from amongst them to be set over the rest; and that this was designed for the preventing some *Abuses*, and *Schisms*. To prove this, He appeals to the *Church* of *Alexandria*, in which He saith the *Presbyters*, even from the time of *St. Mark*, had chosen one, from amongst themselves, whom they called peculiarly by the name of *Bishop*, to be sure for the purpose above-mentioned, *in remedium schismatis*. If therefore the Distinction in his Days between the *Offices* of *Bishops* and *Priests* was *in remedium schismatis*, it follows that this *Election* of a *Bishop* (which He here speaks of) was for the same end. For no one can say but that *St. Jerome* is here speaking of that choice of a *Bishop* which restrained the *Exercise* of the Powers of
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Presbyters, whatever He supposed them Chap. II.
to be.

3. It doth not in the least follow from the *Presbyters* chusing their own *Bishops*, that they pretended to *Ordain* *Presbyters*: and yet the whole of this Argument is founded upon their *chusing* their own *Bishops*. Suppose it be said of any Company of Men that they met together, and chose one from amongst themselves, and having placed him by that means in an higher Station, they called him *King*: doth it follow that because they thus made him *King*, therefore to be sure they did what is of lesser Importance; that therefore any of them, or all of them after this gave *Commissions* to other *Officers* under this *King*? No, From the time of that *Election* He is, by the Will of God, and the Law of *Nature*, invested with all due Authority; and it is his Business to give *Commissions* to all *Inferior Officers*. Just so it is in the Case before us. Let it be granted that those *Presbyters* chose one out of their Number, and that having by that means placed Him in an higher Station, they called him *Bishop*; which is all that St. *Ferome* saith, it will not follow from hence that after this *Election*, they assumed to themselves to give *Commissions* to *Inferior Ecclesiastical Officers*: but rather that from
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Chap. II. this time, this was one of his peculiar Busineses; as I have just now been observing.

4. As there is no *Consequence* in the *Argument* drawn from hence: so neither doth St. *Jerome* give the least colour to such an *Argument*, but in the same place useth such Expressions as absolutely overthrow it. He doth not say that these *Presbyters* conferr'd Power, and Authority upon their *Bishop*: nor doth it follow from what He saith, any more than it follows from a *Prince's* nominating a *Person* to a *Bishoprick* that such *Nomination* is the sole Authority by which He acts in *Ecclesiastical* Matters. He may, notwithstanding this, derive his *Authority* from the Will of God, tho the instant of the *Election* be the time from whence the Will of God concerning his *Authority* must be supposed to take place. And therefore this *Author* doth not well to add such Expressions as these to those in St. *Jerome*, to embellish his *Argument*, which at last must rest wholly upon that Father. Again, He useth the word *Episcopus*, in a peculiar sense, as signifying an *Officer* distinct from *Presbyters*. The same Word He useth in the very next Sentence in the same sense, and denies to *Presbyters* the *Right* of *Ordination*, as I have shewn before, which He here appropriates to *Bishops*. But what is very remarkable, He illustrates the *Presbyters* chusing their

their *Bishop* by the similitude of an *Army's* Chap. II. choosing their *General*. Now from hence it follows, that as the *Army*, after such *Election*, pretended not to the granting *Inferior Commissions* in it, but did indeed by means of this *Election* devolve this upon the Person chosen *General*; so neither did the *Presbyters*, after the *Election* of their *Bishop*, pretend to the granting *Commissions* to *Inferior Presbyters*: and that for a very good Reason, *viz.* because they had by this *Election* devolved this Business upon the Person chosen *Bishop*, as they had the *Care* of the *Church* in all Cases, in a very peculiar manner. But, as I pass, I cannot forbear asking, If this Account of the *Alexandrian Presbyters* choosing their own *Bishops*, be true, what becomes of that *unalienable Right* of the *Laity* in *Elections*, of which this Author upon another occasion speaks?

Thus have we seen of how little force this *Argument*, from these *Presbyters* choosing their own *Bishop*, is, to prove that they did all that time *exercise* their supposed *Right* of *Ordination*: and how little Satisfaction this gives us in our Enquiry, *how*, and *when* the *Exercise* of this *Right* came to be restrained in the *Church*. From hence I likewise draw an Argument that it was the same (in St. *Jerome's* Opinion) in all *Churches*, as in the *Church* of *Alexandria*, because He

Chap. II. makes the Government of Churches to be always the same in all Places: and the Decree on which He founds the *Restraint* put upon *Presbyters*, to be universal, and at the same time. Consequently, therefore, if it was in pursuance of this Decree that the *Alexandrian Church* chose *Bishops*, and that by this Choice the *Presbyters* were restrained in the Exercise of their *Original Rights*; this *Restraint* must likewise be as early, according to St. *Jerome*, in all other Churches, that is, from the very days of the *Apostles*. Consequently, likewise, if the Learned *Blondel* be indeed the Defender, and Follower of St. *Jerome*, He cannot pretend to fix the time of this *Restraint* in any of the Churches later than this: much less can He, consistently with Himself, first fix the time of this *Restraint* (which St. *Jerome* represents as at the same time *Universal*;) to the middle of the *Second Century*, and afterwards argue from St. *Jerome* himself that it could not be in the Church of *Alexandria* till the End of the *Third Century*. However this may be palliated; Having examin'd the so much boasted Instance of the *Alexandrian Presbyters*, and found it so mistaken, and so misapply'd; I shall not trouble myself to search that dark *Author* for any other less material Instances: but content myself with having consider'd what is principally urged, and depended on

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on to the present Debate.

Secondly, This Author adds (p. 101.) that even after Presbyters and Bishops were generally distinguish'd in the Church, it was yet no uncommon thing for mere Presbyters to ordain Persons into the Office of the Ministry: And likewise (p. 102.) that there are instances of Ordinations by Presbyters acknowledged valid, after Episcopal Government was settled in the Church. Now,

I. St. Jerome, St. Chrysostome, and the greatest favourers of Presbyters amongst the Antients, do absolutely deny to Presbyters this Privilege. The latter, whilst He gives them a part in the Government of Churches, as their Right, expressly affirms Bishops to be superior to them in the point of Ordination: and this in the place in which He is proving their Original Rights, and not their Practice: nor doth He intimate that ever any Presbyters so much as pretended to exercise such a Right. The like doth St. Jerome, as I have already shewn. Nay, the Sense which Blondel, and his Followers labour hard to put upon his words, *Quid facit Episcopus*, &c. amounts to this at least, that in his time no Presbyters did, or were allow'd to Ordain. Nor did Aerius ever pretend to it. Here then are exprefs Testimonies of the Advocates

Chap. II, of *Presbyters*, plainly sufficient to prove that there was no such thing attempted by *Presbyters*, or allow'd to them, in the times of these *Writers*; nor known to have ever been allow'd to them in former Times. To oppose to these, and the like *Testimonies* which might be produced out of an *Age* in which to be sure *Episcopacy* was come to its full heighth, two obscure *Canons*, which want a great deal of Critical Learning, to settle their true Reading, and then their true meaning, cannot appear of any great force in this *Cause*, in which we are seeking for plain *Evidence*.

2. Supposing these *Canons* to be such as they are here represented, it doth not follow from *City-Presbyters* and *Chorepiscopi* being restrained by them, that therefore it was usual before for such to *Ordain* as they saw fit. No, I appeal to any Observer of Things, if it be not more probable that such *Canons* might be made, because some *Chorepiscopi* (from their Name) and some *Presbyters* (from other false Reasonings) might at that time have been induced to *innovate* in that matter: as Dr. Maurice hath shewn that the *Canons* against multitudes of *Bishops* (here likewise mentioned) were occasioned by *Heretical Innovators* for their own Ends often multiplying *Bishops*. And therefore, these *Canons* do rather shew that

the *Pretenses* of *Presbyters* to *Ordain* were Chap. II.
look'd upon as *Innovations* not heard of before, and so resisted, than the contrary. And if it should be allow'd that *Presbyters* might *Ordain*, with the *Command* of the *Bishop*, or in his *Name*, this will not at all prove the *Right*, or justify the *Exercise* of it, in opposition to *Bishops*. Still here is manifest *Proof* from these very *Canons* that the *Bishop* was at this time accounted at least the *Fountain* of all *Ordaining Power*, and his *Consent* necessary in all considerable *Acts* of the *Clergy*.

3. I cannot see how this *Argument* drawn from these *Canons*, or *Instances* of *Presbyterian Ordination* allow'd, is consistent with the *Scheme* of *Blondel*, which likewise seems to be espoused by the *Author* now before me. According to Him, *Prime-Presbyters* were in, and from the days of the *Apostles*, settled in the *Churches*: and by his own *Confession Ordination*, or any thing material, could not be perform'd without their bearing a principal Part. After this He fixeth the *Establishment* of *Episcopacy*, properly so call'd, sooner than the middle of the *Second Century*. If by this the *Presbyters* gave not up the *Exercise* of their *Ordaining Office*, what is the *Restraint* which it is so often said they brought upon themselves? If they did, here is no room left for the allowance of any of their

Chap. II. *Ordinations*; no Possibility of defending them upon their own Principles; no Probability that they ever could be acknowledged as good, and valid, by the *Ages* following, when *Custom* had been added to their own *Compact*. Or, will not these *Writers* give to the *Bishops* (when once settled) as great Powers as they allow even their *Prime-Presbyters*? Certainly greater: and if so, must not *Ordination* rest in their hands? And doth not the whole *Current of History* assure us plainly that it did so? Besides, this *Author* observes in other places how fond the *Ecclesiastical Writers* are of confining this Power, and of calling that *Consent* on which He supposeth it to have been founded, by the Name of *Apostolical Institution*: What place is there then left for their allowance of *Ordination* by *Presbyters*, who are so great *Enemies* to it? The like may be said concerning that *Canon* of the *Second Council of Sevil* which this *Author* produceth in another place, (p. 180.) as if something might be built upon that in favour of his *Cause*. Whereas upon his own Principles, and supposing the meaning of the *Canon* to be what He would have it, no *Canon* of so late an Age as that (*viz.* about the Year of *Christ* 617.) can be of any force in this *Debate*. Nay, if it be true, as *Blondel*, and others affirm, that *Episcopacy* was settled generally about

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Forty, or Fifty Years after the *Apostles*, (by Chap. II. which means the Confinement of the Power of Ordination must likewise be introduced) it is impossible that a *Canon* made above Four Hundred Years afterwards should call this a *Novel Constitution*: Nor is it to be allowed, that any *Persons* of so late an Age should be admitted as *Good Witnesses* in this Case, unless they produce their *Vouchers*, and their *Testimonies*, which alone can prove the *Novel Constitution* of *Episcopacy*; whereas their bare Affirmations signify nothing at all to such a *Matter of Fact* as this. As for *Instances* of this, we are sent to *Blondel*, without the naming of any *Particulars* by which this *Author* is willing it should be tried: and in Him I can find not one, plain, and uncontested. The Principal is that of the *Alexandrian Presbyters*, which I have already shewn to be of no force at all in this Cause. That Great Man had *Reading* enough to make any thing obscure, and intricate, but not clearness of Head sufficient to set any Cause in its due Light. It is a Toil, and Labour, even to know his meaning: And having done what is sufficient already to vindicate the Cause I have undertaken, and what, if it be just, no *Modern Instances* can invalidate, I may the more reasonably refuse the trouble of doing things wholly unnecessary. But if any Person have

Chap. II. have a mind to see more particularly what can be said on the Subject of these *Canons*, and *Instances*, or indeed any other piece of *Antiquity*, I refer Him to the *Brief Account of Antient Church-Government*, particularly to p. 223. where He will find these things consider'd: remarking likewise that what *Blondel*, and others have alleged from the *Antient Church of Scotland* hath been answered, beyond all exception, (tho' no notice be taken of it by this *Author*) by the most *Learned* the present *Lord Bishop of Worcester* in his *Historical Account of Church-Government in Great Britain and Ireland*, &c.

4. I shall only add, that if any *Instances* can be given of *Ordination* by *Presbyters* not rescinded, or disapprov'd by the *Church*; (which yet I find not) this will not at all prove that they ought not to have been condemned and rescinded. For the very *Restraint* which, according to the *Patrons* of their Cause, they solemnly and for good *Reasons* brought upon themselves, is a sufficient ground of such a *Condemnation*. It will not indeed prove that they were not originally empower'd to *Ordain*; but it will prove that their *Ordinations* are of no account after they have solemnly devolved the *Exercise* of this *Right* upon another *Person* and particularly the *Ordinations* performed by any *Particular* single *Presbyter* must be looked on as of no *Validity*. Nothing can

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justify them but *Necessity*, which is above all Chap. II.
Law: But *Original Right* of itself signifieth
no more than *No Original Right*, when the
Exercise of it hath been given up, and sus-
pended; especially if this have been con-
firmed by continued, and settled *Custom*. So
that if they ever were allowed of, *Necessity*
alone could be the just Reason for such al-
lowance: and unless that were evidently in
the *Case*, they ought to have been rescinded,
upon the *Principles* of *Blondel*, and his *Fol-
lowers*. Nor doth the not rescinding them
prove any acknowledgement in the *Primi-
tive Church* of such a *Right* in *Presbyters*, sup-
posing them not rescinded; since it might pro-
ceed from other *Reasons* very different from
such an *Acknowledgment*.

To this *second Plea*, therefore, taken from
the *Commission* given to *Ecclesiastical Ministers*,
Mat. 28. 19, 20. I have answered, and pro-
ved at large, 1. That there is no such *Right*
in all who are called to the *Office* of *Teachers*
in the *Church*, as that of *Ordination*, either
express'd, or imply'd in those Words: And
2. That supposing such an *Original Right*,
we find the *Exercise* of it restrained by the
Apostles themselves, and, if ever resumed a-
gain, yet within Forty Years after *their*
Deaths restrained (according to their great-
est *Patrons*) by their own *Consent*, and *Com-
pact*; and this *Restraint* confirmed by long,
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Chap. II. immemorial Custom: And that this *Original Right* is not of itself sufficient to justify the *Exercise* of it after it hath been thus given up; nor any other *Reason* but what will equally justify even *Those* who have no *Original Right* to plead, viz. *Absolute Necessity*.

Sect. 3. *The Third Plea, taken from Presbyters keeping to the Rule of Scripture, considered.*

The *Third Plea* made use of by this *Author* is this, *Our Ordainers keep to the Rule the Scripture gives: and therefore their Ordinations cannot justly be styl'd Irregular*, p. 106. &c. But since He himself hath acknowledged that their *Ordinations* are *Irregular*, and disagreeable to the *Scripture-Rule*, unless *They* be the *Officers* to whom this *Work* is committed in the *New Testament*: And since the *Truth* of this wholly depends upon what He hath said under the two foregoing *Pleas*, this is not an *Argument* so distinct from them, but that it must stand or fall entirely with them. So that there need not any more *Words* about this; for I grant that, if *They* be the *Officers* called in *Scripture* to *Ordain* others, their *Ordinations* are not disagreeable to the *Scripture-Rule* concerning *Ordinations*, tho', as I have already

already said, this alone will not prove *Chap. II*
 them *Regular*, or agreeable to the Will of
 God: And, on the other hand, He cannot
 but grant that if They be not the *Officers*
 empower'd to *Ordain* in the *New Testament*,
 this will be sufficient to prove their *Ordina-*
tions Irregular, not only as they are contra-
 ry to *Eccelesiastical Canons*, but as they are
 disagreeable to the *Rule* laid down in *Script-*
ure. And so the whole Dispute here re-
 solves itself into what hath been said on
 both sides, under the *two* foregoing *Pleas*;
 to which, therefore, I refer the *Reader*.

Sect. 4. *The Fourth Plea, taken from the*
Ends of Ordination, consider'd.

The *Fourth Plea*, in favour of *Presbyterian*
Ordination, is founded upon this, *That all the*
Ends of Ordination are as effectually answer'd,
where Senior Presbyters Ordain, as where Dio-
cesan Bishops are the Persons that officiate, p. 117.
 Now,

1. The former *Arguments* of this *Author* are
 of as much force for *Ordination* by *Junior*
Presbyters, nay, by every single *Presbyter*, ac-
 cording to his own Judgment and Will, as
 by *Senior Presbyters*: and must we now have
 the *Exercise* of this *Right*, all on a sudden,
 confined to the *Senior*? If it may be thus
 confined, and by this means a *Restraint*
 put

Chap. II. put upon many *Presbyters*, then it is evident there may be a *Restraint* justly put upon *Presbyters*, notwithstanding his former Arguments: and therefore, why not the *Restraint* introduced by *Episcopacy*, as well as that introduced by *Presbyteries*?

2. It is possible that the *Ends* of *Ordination* may be as well answer'd by Understanding, Serious and Judicious *Laymen*, as by *Senior Presbyters*, supposing *Lay-Ordinations* the settled Method: Therefore, If this Argument prove any thing concerning the *Right* of *Presbyters* to *Ordain*, it equally proves the *Right* of *Lay-Christians* to *Ordain*; which I suppose this Writer will not contend for. But indeed when all acknowledge that there should be one method of *Ordination* settled, if for no other, at least for *prudential Reasons*; no departure from this one settled Method can answer the *Ends* of *Ordination* so well as they might be answer'd, were there no other set up in opposition to it.

3. If this Argument signify nothing without supposing the force of the two first, I answer, that it signifieth nothing at all in this place, either for the proving the *Right* of *Presbyters* to *Ordain*, or the Reasonableness of exercising that *Right*. And that it doth signify nothing without that *Supposition* this

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Author himself must acknowledge. For what Chap. II.

if the *Ends* of *Ordination* may be served by *Presbyters* *Ordaining*? Unless *They* be the *Persons* empower'd in the *New Testament* to do this Work, He must confess this is of no Importance at all. What if the *Ends* of *Ordination* might be served by a *Bench* of *Justices*? Would this entitle them to the *Office*? If not, then it is plain this *Argument* signifieth nothing to the *Justification* of any *Persons* in their *Ordinations*; and consequently nothing to the *Justification* of *Presbyters* in their performing that *Office*. So that it appears that tho' this *Author* would willingly seem to make use of *four Arguments*, on this Subject; yet in truth He hath produced but *two*: the *two* last being of no manner of force consider'd by themselves, but depending so on the *two* *first* as that they must stand or fall with them.

Thus have I consider'd the force of those *Pleas* which are reviv'd by this *Late Author*; and shewn, as I hope, that they are not, either separately or unitedly considered, sufficient to prove the *Right* of *Ordination* to belong to *Presbyters* originally; or, supposing them to have such a *Right*, that their *Exercise* of it, at this time, is justifiable. I shall only add, that this *Author*

Chap. II. *thor* having appealed to the *New Testament* as the only *Foundation* upon which He desires to be thought to build this *Right*, and the Justifiableness of the *Exercise* of it; and having desired so often that his *Cause* should be tried by *plain* and *positive* Proofs from *Scripture*; I have followed Him thro' every *Passage* which He hath alleged from thence: And therefore I hope He will not say that I have avoided the *Point* in debate, or artfully dissembled in the handling it, merely because I have not likewise followed *Blondel* thro' that *Labyrinth* of *Antiquity* in which He hath left this *Cause* perplexed indeed, but not illustrated, or established. However, I have alleged what is sufficient to shew the *Invalidity* of the most material Things, even of those which are urged by Him in favour of *Ordination* by *Presbyters*: and so have fully answer'd the design of this *Chapter*.

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The Pleas, lately advanced, in favour of the Laity's Right to Ordain, consider'd.

FROM all that is before said it most manifestly appears that it was the Will of the *Apostles* that the affair of *Ordination* should be managed by *Persons* already Ordained; and that, amongst these, *Bishops*, as distinguished from *Presbyters*, and other *Pastors*, have the fairest *Plea*. But because there have been lately Attempts to revive the Pretensions not only of *Presbyters*, but also of the *Laity* to this *Office*, it is fit I should consider what hath been urged, on their part, by a late celebrated *Author*, who must be supposed to have neglected nothing which can be advanced, with any shew of probability, in this *Cause*. And what He hath said on this *Head*, tho' often very obscurely expressed, and scatter'd into several parts of his Work, I shall endeavour to collect into *Two* distinct *Arguments*, and shall consider the force of them as impartially, and as briefly as possible.

A brief Defense of

Sect. I. Argument the First, taken from the Natural Right of the Laity.

Rights of
the Christi-
an Church,
p. 80.

The first Argument, in favour of the Right of the Laity to Ordain, is taken from their Natural Right to appoint to themselves the Persons who are to officiate in holy things. Now here, on the one side, I freely grant that were the World left entirely to the Light of Nature, and Reason, without any Reveled Religion, this would hold true that each Congregation meeting for the Worship of God hath an original Right to appoint whom they see fit to be their Minister in their Assemblies: And, on the other side, this Author must likewise grant, that where there is an extraordinary Revelation from God, and Rites and Institutions in this of a positive Nature, it depends upon his Will what sort of Persons shall be Ministers in this Dispensation; by what Methods they shall be made such; and who shall be the Judges of the Qualifications; and that if by any means his Will appears to the contrary, there can be no force in the Argument drawn from the Natural Right of the Laity. Now altho' Jesus Christ himself did not settle all things relating to the Order, and Regularity of his Kingdom on Earth, yet He manifestly commission'd his Apostles to do what they saw fit: and

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by that *Commission*, their *Rules*, *Advices*, and *Institutions*, in the business now under Consideration, ought to be of great force. For whether their Appointments, in matters of Order, and Regularity, were the Directions of that *Holy Spirit* with which they were endow'd in all Cases that required it; or the results of their own *Prudence*; they were such as the Wisdom of God thought best they should be: otherwise, He would not have order'd, or permitted them to have been what they are. Consequently they are to be regarded as highly, as any matters of Order, and Regularity ought to be. But I must observe that it is very hard, and unreasonable for this *Author* to require a *positive Depriving Law in this Case reaching to all Lay-Christians in all Ages*. This is indeed to suppose Matters of Order and Regularity to be Matters of *Essence*, and *Absolute Necessity*. Nay, question whether such a Law could have been so plainly enacted, and so clearly expressed, but that *Arts* might have been found out to evade or obscure the force of it. But it will be always sufficient to all ingenious, and good Minds, in points of Order, to know what the Will of the *Apostles* was; and it will be always their desire to conform themselves to it as near as possible. And what the Will of the *Apostles* was, when the *Christians* multiplied, and the Or-

Chap. III. *der and Regularity of the Churches* was to be regarded; I leave to any one to judge from the *first Chapter* of this *Treatise*, in which I have shewn both from the *Instances of Ordination*, and *Rules* concerning it, recorded in the *New Testament*, and from the acknowledged *Testimony*, and *Practice* of the *first Ages*, that the *Persons* manifestly design'd by the *Apostles* for this *Work*, were *Ecclesiastical Officers*, superior to *Presbyters*, and distinct from the *Laity*. Nay, it is manifest, that had it been the *Will* of the *Apostles* that the *Laity* should be left to the exercise of this *Right*, *St. Paul* would have given, or sent *Orders* to *Ephesus* that every *Congregation of Christians*, when it was formed, should chuse one from amongst themselves for the performance of *Religious Offices*; and not have appointed *Timothy* to that *Work*: the very constituting of *Him* to ordain *Presbyters* being a *Confutation* of the *Opinion* of this *Author*. But because this *Author* hath something concerning the *Power of Lay-Christians* in this *Affair*, which appears to contradict this *Restraint* of their *Natural Right* by the *Apostles*, I proceed to consider what is alleged to this purpose.

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Sect. 2. Argument the Second, taken from the Laity's Practice in the times of the Apostles.

The Second Argument, urged by this Author, is taken from the Laity's being allow'd to exercise this Right in the days of the Apostles. Thus, p. 158. He argues that all Church Power was in the People, from the Directions given to them in the New Testament; and from their Practice, in the days of the Apostles. To which I answer,

1. The right way of proceeding in this Case, is to consider what was the Will of the Apostles, when once Believers came to multiply, and there was Occasion and Opportunity of settling what belonged to the Order, and Regularity, as well as to the Essence of the Churches of Christ: for this could not be done at first. So that supposing the Laity did exercise the Right we are now considering, at the very beginning, before the Churches could be brought into any Form, this will not shew that it was the Will of the Apostles they should do so afterwards; nor will this avail any thing against a Confinement in this Matter, if it can be made appear that the Apostles afterwards sufficiently declared their Minds in favour of such a Confinement, for the better promoting of Order,

Chap. III. and Regularity in the Church. I say not this, as if I granted that the *Laity* did ever exercise this *Right*, even at the first Foundation of the Church: But supposing they did, I argue, that this of itself will not justify their future Exercise of it. For,

2. There is not any thing produced by this *Author* from which it follows that the *Laity* did ever exercise the *Right* of Ordination in the days of the *Apostles*; or may do it, agreeably to their Will, in these After-ages: as will appear by examining particularly what is alleged to this purpose.

First, It is urged that St. Paul directs the Corinthians to *put away*, or excommunicate the *Incestuous Person*; and not to keep company with a Wicked Brother; the Galatians to restore any one taken in a Fault; the Thessalonians to warn the unruly, and to see that no Man render evil for evil; the Romans to mark those who cause Offences, and to avoid them, p. 157. and the Colossians to say to Archippus, Take heed to thy Ministry, to fulfill it, p. 133. Now, 1. There are but two of all these Directions which have the face of any thing like what this *Author* calls Church-Power, and Authority in the People; and which might not have been given to them in the same Words, had they not had the least Authority in Ecclesiastical Affairs. For doth it imply any thing of

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Authority, or Power, that Christians were directed to avoid, and fly from, Persons of evil, and dividing Tempers, and of scandalous Lives? And are not all Lay-Christians oblig'd and directed to do the same, in all Countries, to this Day, without having any Authority in Affairs merely Ecclesiastical? Doth it imply any thing of Church-Power, properly so called, that all Christians are directed to do one another all the real Service they can, by Admonitions, and Reproofs, when they are necessary? The Direction to see that no Man render evil for evil, is certainly to be interpreted that every one should look to himself in that point, and not to others; and what is this more than an Exhortation to any other Virtue would have been? The Direction concerning Archippus was nothing but a Message from St. Paul himself, to be deliver'd by the People, because at that time He had no occasion to write himself particularly to Him: and implies no Authority in Them to say any thing in Public to their Pastor any more than the like would do now, should a Bishop have occasion to write to a Company of Christians, and at the end of his Letter desire them to deliver a Message, and Direction of his to their Pastor. Had such Arguments as these been produced in favour of any Authority in the Clergy, how would they have been ridiculed by this Au-

thor? 2. The *two* Passages which only can pretend to serve his purpose, are those which concern the *putting away* a Wicked Person, and *restoring one taken in a Fault*. The latter of these, *Gal. 6. 1.* is confined to the Persons called *Spiritual*, and so is not the Office of the whole *Christian Laity*: Besides, it is not at all necessary to suppose any *Public Act* of the *Church* here intended; or any thing more than that good *Christians* should pity a Person fallen into any Sin, and endeavour by all proper Methods to bring him to himself again; or to make him sound and whole again as the Word imports, which is no act of *Authority*, but at this Day a Duty which may be exercised by all good *Christians* who have it in their Power. So that neither is this Passage any thing to the purpose. As for the *other*, in which the *Corinthians* are required to put away the *Wicked Person*, it may be granted that this was properly *Excommunication*: and that the *Assembly* of *Christians*, nay and all the *Christians* of those parts, from whom He was to be separated for some time, should unanimously joyn in this *Act*, I think highly reasonable, and particularly agreeable to the state of the *Church* at that time. But to infer from hence, that the *Apostles* could not have exercised this Power without these People; or that the *Pastors* and *Ministers* in their *Congregations* were excepted

excepted by *St. Paul*, and their *Consent*, and Chap. III.
Concurrence not supposed, or desired, is very weak, and wholly groundless. So that no *Powers* can from hence be proved to belong to the *Laitie*, consider'd as distinct, and separated from the *Clergy*: and consequently no great Service be done to the *Cause* undertaken by this *Author*. For my own part, I wish all *Congregations* would joyn in shewing their *Public Abhorrence* of *Notorious*, and *Scandalous* Sinners, till they shew some marks of *True Repentance*, and *Reformation*. I freely grant them *Authority* enough to do that: but see not how it follows from hence that *Lay-Christians* either did in the days of the *Apostles*, or may now, agreeably to their Will, exercise the *Right* of *Ordaining Pastors* in the *Church of God*. Besides, this was such a matter as must have been very ineffectual to the purposes intended, unless all the *Congregations* of *Lay-Christians* had joyn'd in it: For what doth any *Excommunication* signify, if the *Person* be not, in the *Apostle's* Phrase, put away; or be cherished, and encouraged by numbers of other *Christians*? So that there was more reason for *St. Paul's* putting this *Office* upon the *Lay-Christians* of those Days, than what can be alleged concerning any *Office*, or *Authority* of another Nature. Add to this, that, according to this *Author* himself, this *Excommunication* was proper only
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Chap. III in that *State* of the *Church* in which *Extraordinary* and *Miraculous* Consequences were seen to follow upon it. He himself will not allow this same Power to the *Laiety* in the *Ordinary* State of the *Church*: Let him not therefore argue from hence for other Powers in the *Laiety*, in the present condition of the *Church*; and these such as are of a very different Nature, and depend not at all on this. For, 3. Supposing all these *Directions* here alleged by Him, did truly prove, as this one doth, that the *Laiety* had some Powers entrusted to them, in the *Apostolical Age*; this will not at all prove that they were allow'd, or call'd to, the Exercise of others wholly distinct, and vastly different from these: especially when it may be manifestly proved, that these other sort of Powers were entrusted with a peculiar sort of *Ecclesiastical Officers*. This Consideration alone is a sufficient Reply to all these *Allegations* of this *Writer*.

How unworthy a Proceeding is it, therefore, in this *Author* to infer from such *Passages* as these, that it is plain, by the general *Epistles*, that all *Church-Power* was in the *People*, as He doth, p. 158. when we see the utmost that can follow from them is, that in one particular instance of *Church-Power* they had a considerable part, but this such an instance as infers not their Concern in any other: when at the same time He entirely
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overlooks the particular *Epistles* to *Timothy*, Chap. III. and *Titus*, in which, He cannot but know in his *Conscience*, that there is as manifest a *Confinement* of the Power of *Ordination*, to a superior sort of *Church-Officers*; and as plain *Declarations* of the Mind of *St. Paul* in this Point, as could well be expected in a matter of *Order*, and *Regularity*. For if *He*, when occasion offered for the ordering this matter, thought it best to overlook not only the *Presbyters*, but all the particular *Congregations* of *Lay-Christians*, already settled at *Ephesus*, and in *Crete*; and to entrust the business of *Ordination* with *Timothy*, and *Titus* so entirely as not to make any consent of the *Laity* necessary; this is such a *Confinement*, as that if this *Author* could find the like in favour of *Lay-Ordinations*, I would promise Him to become his *Profelyte* in this part of his *Controversy*. But in the mean while, that he should, by neglecting to mention it, lead his *Reader* to think that no such *Argument* could be urged for *Episcopal Ordination*, I cannot reconcile to that *Freedom*, and *Impartiality* he every where pretends.

Agreeably to what goes before, it is urged, p. 159. that our *Saviour* himself places the *Der-nier Resort* in the *Church*, which in *Scripture* always signifies the *People*: And so I suppose from hence it follows that all *Church-Power* is in *them*. Now, 1. I deny that the *Church*

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Chap. III. signifieth the *People*, separately consider'd, in this very place, or indeed in any place but where such a *Distinction* between the *Church*, and the *Pastors* of it is made, as this *Author* is not willing to allow between the *Clergy*, and *Laity*: much less any such Sense as to cast such a Reflexion upon the *Pastors* of it as this *Writer* labours to deduce from hence. I say it doth not here signify the *People* distinctly consider'd, because it is not to be supposed that our *Lord* would debar his very *Apostles*, or *Pastors* appointed by them in the several *Churches*, from all Concern, or so much as a *Vote* in their *Congregations* about the Matter spoken of. Nay, I cannot think but that this *Author* himself would allow an *Apostle* a single *Vote* in a *Congregation* upon such an Occasion. But, 2. Let it be so; Let the *Dernier Resort* in the Case mention'd, *Mat. 18. 17.* be to the *People* distinctly consider'd: *i. e.* Let the private Offences of one Man against another be brought before the *Congregation* of *Lay-Christians* to which they belong, after other more private Methods have been tried in vain: and let an *Exhortation*, and Discourse be made, in their Names, to the *Injurious* Person. I say, let this be allow'd, what will follow from hence? Certainly no *Power* but for this one Business: no Powers wholly different from this, and wholly independent on it: and

and what then doth the *Dernier Resort* in this *Chap. III.* one Matter signify? Or how can this *Text* serve the purpose here intended by this *Author*? Unless it follow that because the *last resort* is to be made to the *People* in case an injurious Person be not brought to temper by other Methods; therefore the *last resort* is to be made to them in *all Cases*: which this *Author* will not surely say. Or if it do follow from hence that the *last resort* is to be made to the *Church*, in this sense of the Word, then let it follow likewise that the *first resort* is not to be made to the *People* in any Case; (which as undoubtedly follows from this Passage of *Scripture*;) and then let it be consider'd what the *Cause* of this *Author* will gain by such an *Argument*.

Secondly, It is urged that the Practice both of the *Apostles*, and of the first *Lay-Christians*, proves the Exercise of the *Right of Ordination* to have been allowed to the *People* in the very days of the *Apostles*: that They voted in the Election of *Deacons*, *Act. 6. 5.* that when a Person was chosen to the *Apostleship*, it was determined by their *Suffrages*, *Act. 1. 26.* that They sent forth *Barnabas*, *Act. 11. 22.* and appointed *Companions and Assistants* for *St. Paul* in his Travels, *2 Cor. 8. 19.* and consequently chose the more ordinary *Church-Officers*,
tho'

Chap. III. *tho' the Apostles, as chief Directors are said to Ordain; that the Brethren as well as the Apostles, and Elders were concerned in the Council of Jerusalem, Act. 15. 23. and that the Apostles thought it their Duty to give an account of their Actions to the People, as St. Peter did, Act. 11. 4. p. 158, 159. These Instances must be particularly consider'd. And,*

1. *The Apostles did indeed, in the Case of an Office which they thought too different from the main end of their Apostleship for themselves to attend to, put it upon the People to nominate the Persons whom they thought proper to be Deacons. But in the first place it doth not appear that they accounted this any Privilege of the People; or that they thought themselves under any necessity of doing this: but rather the contrary, because the People claimed no such Right, and pleaded no such Privilege, but were bid to do this by the Apostles, without their thinking any thing of it: And in the next place, they confined the People to the number Seven, and after they had put the Nomination of the Persons upon the People, they reserv'd the Right of appointing them to that Office to themselves, Act. 6. 3. Look YE out among you seven Men of honest report, whom WE may appoint over this business; which accordingly they did, v. 6. not accounting the Nomination of the People sufficient, when they were*
pre-

present themselves to do something farther. I suppose this *Author* will grant that the *Apostles* might have excepted against any of the Persons named; and then certainly the *People* must have nominated another. So that here is an Instance and Proof which this *Author* sometimes calls for, how the *Nomination* may be in one, tho not so absolutely but Exceptions may be made; and yet the *Appointment* and *Ordination* to an Office in the Power of another so far that the *Nomination* shall not be of force without it. And if so, what Service will the *Nomination* of these *Deacons* do to his Cause? Especially considering farther, that it doth not follow because the *Apostles* allow'd this in the Case of an *Inferior Office*, therefore it was their Will that it should be so likewise in another. And again, if this *Instance* prove any thing of their Will with respect to this *lowest Office*, the *Instances* of *Timothy*, and *Titus*, and the management of *Ordinations* at *Ephesus*, and in *Crete*, will as effectually prove that They thought not fit to give to the *Laitie* so much as the *Privilege* of the *Nomination* of the Persons to be *Ordained* to the higher Office of *Presbyters*; much less, the *Privilege* of the sole *Appointment* of them to that Office. For if this shew the Will of the *Apostles* concerning the Office of *Deacons*; the *Epistles* to *Timothy* and *Titus* may well be allowed to shew their Will

Chap. III. Will concerning the Ordination of *Presbyters*, and what Concern the *People* have in it.

2. It is said that *when a Person was chosen into the Apostleship, it was determined by the Suffrages of the People*, Act. 1. 26. Now, 1. When the *Church* was very small in number, and as many as could, or dared, kept constantly together, as it were in a *Body*, nothing could be more natural, or fitting, than that the *Apostles*, who were always with them, and waiting for their *Lord's* Promise, should do nothing in any case without first proposing it to this constant *Assembly*: but this not out of any necessity from the thing itself, but only out of prudent Considerations, fitted to the *State* of the *Church* at that time. Nor could their joyning the *People* with themselves in this first Act, preclude them from establishing, or following any other Method afterwards in the appointment of *Church-Officers*. So that supposing that an *Apostle* himself had been chosen, at this time, by the *Votes* of the *People*, it will not follow that it was the Will of the *Apostles*, after the descent of the *Holy Ghost*, and when the *Churches* came to increase, and to be settled, that the Appointment even of the lowest Order of *Church-Officers* should be left to the Suffrages of the *People*. 2. Be it so, that the *People* did chuse an *Apostle* by their *Votes*, still here

here were, besides the *Laity*, the other *Ele-*
ven Apostles, who first proposed, and di-
 rected this Affair. So that nothing can be
 urged from hence for any *Ordinations* by the
Laity without any *Church-Officers* in conjun-
 ction with them: which will be very little
 to this *Writer's* purpose. But, 3. The truth
 is, that according to the account of this
 Matter in the place cited, it is impossible
 that any such thing should be here intend-
 ed as the chusing the *Apostle Matthias* by the
Suffrages of the *Laity*. For the matter is re-
 corded thus, that St. *Peter* stood up in the
 midst of the *Disciples* (amongst which are
 mention'd several *Women* in the Verse be-
 fore;) and spoke to this effect, (probably to
 the other *Apostles* peculiarly; for the *Appel-*
lation used agrees not to all in the whole
Assembly;) that it was fit another *Apostle*
 should be chosen upon the Death of *Judas*;
 that in pursuance of this, *They* (probably the
Apostles only, for the Reason before given;)
 consented to name, not *one* Person, but *two*;
 and these, according to St. *Peter's* Direction,
 only out of those who had been with *Jesus*
 from the beginning of his *public Ministry*;
 that an Appeal was then made to *God Al-*
mighty, and a *Prayer* to Him to interpose in
 a peculiar manner to shew which of the two
 He would have to be an *Apostle*; that after
 this *Prayer* they drew *Lots* (the manner of

Chap. III. which *Grotius* describes) and the *Apostleship* fell by *Lot* upon *Matthias*: and that after this He was *numbred with the Eleven Apostles*, or accounted one of that Supreme Order, *i. e.* immediately upon *God's* having in effect declared it by ordering the *Lot* to fall upon Him. This is the natural meaning of this Passage: in which we see it is not plainly expressed, nor so much as probably imply'd, that the *People* bore any part, unless as *Witnesses* to this *Transaction*. But supposing they did bear a *Part* in it; that it was not by way of *Voting*, (as is argued from the *Word* here translated *numbred*, because it sometimes signifieth one chosen by *Suffrages*, or *Votes*;) may appear from the following Remarks. 1. It is manifest here was no thought of *voting* an *Apostle* into his Office, because there can be no place for *Lots* upon that Supposition; and the *Prayer* used is not at all proper, had this matter been to have been carried by a majority of *Votes*. For to appeal to one *who knows the Hearts of Men* perfectly, is as much opposed to putting a matter to the *Votes* of those who know *not* the *Hearts of Men* as any thing can be; and doth as much exclude all *Suffrage*, and *Voting*, as any Method can do. So that the Choice of this Method is a Demonstration that the *Apostles* thought not fit to trust their own Judgment, or to put this

mat-

matter in the Power of *Humane Determination*. Chap. II.

2. The proper place for *voting* had been before the *Lots* were cast: and it is very strange to talk of *voting*, after God *Almighty* himself had been invoked, and was understood to have interposed in a peculiar manner to determine the *Lot* to *Matthias*. For how absurdly doth it look, first to draw *Lots* in the solemn presence of *Almighty God*, and pray to Him to shew whom He hath chosen of the two; and after God hath discover'd his Will in favour of *Matthias*, then to put it to the *Vote* whether He shall be the Man, or no? Was He an *Apostle* as soon as God had determined the *Lot* to Him, or not? If not, then *that* which is here called God's shewing that He had chosen him was not sufficient to make Him an *Apostle*, which no one surely will say: If He was an *Apostle* immediately upon God's having determined the *Lot* to Him, then what place could there be for the Votes of any Mortals upon Earth? They might as well have pretended to have put it to the *Vote*, whether the other *Eleven* should be *Apostles*, as whether *Matthias* should, after the *Lot* had fallen upon Him, by *Almighty God's* special Determination. 3. It is highly reasonable to think that the *Apostles* would not put such a Matter as this upon *Humane Votes*, but make an Appeal as immediately as they

could to God himself, that the Person chosen into the *Apostleship* might not come behind themselves, or want that *Characteristic* of an *Apostle*, the being chosen by the peculiar Interposition, and Designation of their great Master. 4. I see not how it can agree with the Principles of this *Author* himself to suppose it possible that the *Election* of a Person to the *Apostleship* should be in the People. For, 1. The utmost that He contends for in the name of the *Laity*, is a *Right* in every *Congregation* to appoint or *ordain* their own *Minister*: but his *Argument* drawn from this place of *Scripture*, if it prove this *Right* for which it is alleged, it will likewise prove a *Right* in one *Congregation* to chuse and appoint the Person who shall *govern* and *teach*, in any other, as He himself shall think fit, all over the *Christian* World; for such a Power belonged to an *Apostle*: And consequently, 2. This *Right* of Electing so often ascribed to every *Congregation* by this *Author*, is absolutely overturned by this *Argument*, which pleads for a *Right* in the *Laity* assembled with the *Apostles* at *Jerusalem* to impole a *Governor* and *Teacher* upon all other *Christians* which then were, or should afterwards be: who had as much right to *vote* in the succeeding Days whether *Matthias* should be an *Apostle*, as that single *Congregation* had to do it at that time, being as much concern'd

cern'd in his *Apostleship* as *They* were. 3. It is an Absurdity, upon this *Author's* own Principles, to think that an *Apostle* could be chosen even by all the *Congregations* of *Lay-Christians* that were afterwards, put together. For their Power, according to Himself, can extend no farther than themselves, and the appointing any one to govern, or teach, themselves. Whereas the *Commission* of an *Apostle* reached farther than these already converted: and his Business was to be a *Witness* of *Christ's Resurrection*, as *St. Peter* expresseth it in the place now before us, and to preach his *Gospel* to those who had never before heard of it. And what *Right* can any *Congregation* be supposed to have to grant a *Commission* to such an *Officer* as this? 5. I add that the very *Word* here used, upon which the *Argument* is founded, cannot, as it stands here, be interpreted of *Election* by *Suffrages*, by any *Rules* of *Grammar*. For it is compounded with the *Preposition* *σὺν* which signifieth *with*, and the words *μετὰ τῶν ἑνδεκά ἀποστόλων* are immediatly connected to it. Now this may very well be rendred, *He was numbred together with the Eleven Apostles*; but it cannot be rendred, *He was chosen by Suffrages together with the Eleven Apostles*, unless it be thought fit likewise to assert that at the same time the *People* voted the other

Chap. III. *Eleven* also into the *Apostleship*, which I hope this *Author* will not do.

3. It is alleged that the *People* sent forth *Barnabas*, *Act. 11. 22.* Now, 1. Supposing this to have been done by the *People*, the same Word might have been used (where perfect Accuracy was not designed, and at a time when there was no need of it) had they only recommended it to Him peculiarly as the fittest Person, to go and preach *Jesus Christ* amongst a particular sort of *People*. But, 2. This conferred no *Authority* upon *Barnabas* which He had not before: for He might have gone himself upon this very *Errand*, without the Formality of being sent by them, had He thought fit to do so; being every way qualified, and commissioned to do it before this. And therefore this is no instance of the *Laity's Electing*, or calling, or appointing any *Ecclesiastical Officer* to an *Office*, which He was not before commissioned to execute: and consequently is not to the purpose of this *Author*. 3. By this *Argument* the *Laity* in a *Congregation* have not only a *Right* to appoint their own *Ministers*, but *Preachers* in other *Congregations* likewise, which is contrary to the Principles of this *Author*. 4. The *Text* saith that the *Church* at *Jerusalem* sent him forth. Now in that *Church* there were certainly *Apostles*, *Prophets*, *Teachers*, very *Extraordinary Ecclesiastical*

cal Officers, as well as *Lay-men*: and why will not this *Author* suppose that *these* were the Persons who sent him forth? If He will but give himself the trouble of looking into the *Thirteenth Chapter* of this same *History* of the *Acts* of the *Apostles*, He will find something which may give light in this Matter. We read there, *v. 1.* that there were at *Antioch*, either *in* or *about* the *Church*, *Prophets* and *Teachers*: and of them particularly *Paul*, and *Barnabas*, and *three* others are named; *v. 2.* that whilst these were ministering to God, and fasting, the *Holy Ghost* said separate me *Paul*, and *Barnabas* to the particular Work to which I now design them; and *v. 3.* that they, *i. e.* manifestly, the other *Ecclesiastical* Persons named before, *fasted*, and *prayed*, and *laid their hands* upon them, &c. Now, 1. If the Words import that these *Prophets* and *Teachers* were *in* the *Church*, then the word *Church* doth not always signify the *Laitie* distinct from the *Clergy*. 2. If the Words import only that they were *about* the *Church*, then the word *Church* doth indeed here signify the *Company* of *Lay-Christians*: but this not only not excluding, as I hope, the *Apostles* and *Prophets* from being *Christians*, but manifestly implying such a distinction between *Teachers*, and *People* as this *Author* is not willing to admit. 3. If the *Ecclesiastical Officers* here mentioned were distinct

A brief Defense of

Chap. III. distinct from the *Church* here mentioned, and this *Church* was only the *Laity*, hence ariseth a plain Observation, that when *Paul* and *Barnabas* were now to be sent upon a particular, considerable Business, the *Holy Ghost* himself overlooked the *Church*, in this *Author's* sense of the Word, and called upon these *Ecclesiastical Officers*, the *Teachers* of this *Church*, as the most proper Persons to set apart *Paul*, and *Barnabas* to the particular Business then in view. I think it much better, and safer to observe from this plain Passage, what Method the *Holy Ghost* thought fit to take in such a Case as this, than to argue from an obscure, or ambiguous word used in a Passage, in which it is plain the *Writer* did not design to set down the particular Circumstances of the *Fact*. From all which it may appear how unreasonable it is to argue from the sending forth of *Barnabas*, Act. 11. 22. that the *People* (distinctly considered) exercised the *Right of Ordination* in the Days of the *Apostles*.

4. It is urged, that the *Laity* appointed *Companions*, and *Assistants* for *St. Paul* in his *Travels*, whom He calls the *Apostles* of the *Churches*, and the *Glory of Christ*. 2 Cor. 8. 19. Now, 1. I wonder this *Author* doth not argue that *St. Paul* was the *Apostle* of the *People* likewise, for it is manifest They sent their *Charity* by Him, to the *Brethren* in *Judea*,
Act.

Act. 11. 30. as St. *Luke* in short expresseth it: Chap. III.
 tho' St. *Paul* himself saith, They beseeched
 Him with great importunity to take upon
 Him that Affair, 2 Cor. 8. 4. in which He
 was as truly the *Apostle* of the *Churches*, or
 one sent by the *Churches* on that Business,
 as the *others* here spoken of. Perhaps there-
 fore, the *others* were likewise beseeched, and
 importuned to accompany Him. 2. The
 Truth of the matter is this, The *Churches*
 (*Prophets*, and *Apostles*, and *Teachers*, as well
 as *Brethren* without doubt) thought good
 that such and such Persons should accompa-
 ny St. *Paul*: and they themselves likewise
 thought good that it should be so: and
 St. *Paul* himself thought it good; otherwise
 He was under no Obligation to accept of
 these *Companions*. But what is this to the
Peoples sole appointing any Person to an Of-
 fice merely *Ecclesiastical*? 3. Supposing this
 done only by the *Laity*, that they appointed
 the *Brother* whose Praise is in the *Gospel*, 2
 Cor. 8. 19. and others to joyn with St. *Paul*;
 this was in a Business relating to their own
Charitable Contributions, and what is this to
 their appointing a Person not already called
 to it, to an Office merely *Ecclesiastical*? con-
 cerning which only our Debate is. This
 conferr'd no *Ecclesiastical Office* upon any Per-
 son sent with St. *Paul*, nor confirmed any.
 If they were *Ecclesiastical Officers* before this,
 they

Chap. III. they remained in all respects the same without any addition: If they were *Lay-men*, They received no *Ecclesiastical Commission*, but remained perfect *Lay-men*, notwithstanding they were thus sent by the *People* to accompany *St. Paul*. So that this *Instance* is so little to the purpose, that I cannot but wonder to find it alleged. 4. If the *People* must needs be understood in the place cited, by this *Author* to have sent, or appointed *Ecclesiastical Officers* who were not so before (and nothing less than this can serve his purpose;) then it follows that the *People* of one Church appointed them for other Churches: which is, according to *Him*, *Tyranny*, and *Imposition*, and therefore destroys his own Principles. As for their being called the *Apostles of the Churches*, He knows the Words can't be meant in the sense in which *St. Paul* was an *Apostle*, but that they only signify Persons sent by the Churches upon their Business: And as for their being called the *Glory of Christ*; so is every good Man who is a Credit to *Christianity*, whether He be an *Ecclesiastic*, or *Lay-man*.

5. From the three foregoing Instances, viz. the chusing an *Apostle*; sending forth *Barnabas*; and appointing *Companions* to *St. Paul* in his Travels, this *Author* argues that if they were thus concerned in chusing *Extraordinary Ministers*, it can't be thought but that they exercised

cised the same Power in chusing the Ordinary. Chap. III.

In answer to this, 1. I have shewn that *They* did not chuse an *Apostle*; that they conferr'd not the least part of the *Ecclesiastical Office* upon *Barnabas*, nor used any *Authority* over Him; and that their chusing Persons to accompany *St. Paul* hath not the least relation either to the appointing any one to an *Ecclesiastical Office* who was not in it before; or so much as to the determining any one, who is already an *Ecclesiastic*, to exercise his *Ecclesiastical Function* after such a peculiar manner, or in such a particular place. And therefore I conclude that since such *Instances* do not shew that the *Laity* were concerned in appointing any Persons to an *Ecclesiastical Office*, the *Conclusion* He draws from them necessarily falls to the ground. 2. Supposing the *People* did chuse the *Extraordinary*, and *Supreme Church-Officers*, it is so far from following from hence that they chose the *Ordinary*, and *Inferior* likewise, that the contrary follows from this very thing. For just as we see that the *People* by the electing a *King* do utterly preclude themselves from giving *Commissions*, and *Authority* to the *Inferior Officers*, who are to act under Him, and devolve this matter upon the Person chosen *King*; so likewise supposing they chose the *Supreme Church-Officers*, the *Apostles* themselves, it is manifest they did by this *Choice* give

Chap. III. give them the Power of granting *Commissions* to the *Inferior Clergy* who were to act under their *Care*, and *Inspection*. 3. That the *Apostles* did take upon them to grant these *Commissions*, or ordain *Presbyters*, as *Chief Directors* this *Author* owns in the following Words, tho' He adds it was with the *Consent* of the *People*. So that here is an acknowledgment that the *People* did not ordain *Inferior Church-Officers* without the *Apostles*; from whence I argue that He must acknowledge something more necessary to *Ordination*, in the days of the *Apostles*, than the *Appointment*, or *Choice* of a *Congregation* of *Lay-men*, which destroys his *Argument*, p. 80. And, on the other hand, that the *Apostles* did ordain *Presbyters* without consulting the *Laity*, or without thinking it necessary so to do, I appeal to *Acts* 14. 23. where no mention is made of the *Peoples* concern in this *Affair*; and to the *Epistles* to *Timothy* and *Titus*, written with a peculiar Eye to this matter, in which the Management of it is given into the hands of those two *Ecclesiastical Officers*, commissioned by *St. Paul* himself to that purpose, without a word in them of any necessity of the *Peoples* concurrence with them, much less of any *Right* in them to execute that *Office* by themselves, without any *Ecclesiastical Officer*, which this *Author* contends for. As for the *Epistles* to

Timothy

Timothy, and *Titus*, the matter is plain, be- Chap. III.
 cause it cannot be supposed that the *Words*
 used there concerning this matter have any
 relation to the *chusing* by *lifting up the hand*;
 and no Direction is there given concerning
 any part the *Laity* were to bear in it: which
 certainly had been done, if *St. Paul* had
 thought fit to make them the *Ordainers* of
 their own *Presbyters*. Which may satisfy us
 likewise that *St. Paul's* other *Ordinations*,
 (particularly this *Acts* 14. 23. now menti-
 oned,) were not managed after a different
 manner: tho' this *Author* is pleased to argue
 from the word *χειροτονῶντες* here used,
 that the *Apostles* ordained them by the con-
 sent of the *People* expressed by lifting up
 their Hands, p. 358. To which I answer,
 1. Tho' this might be the *first* Signification
 of this word, yet it is very frequently, and
 most commonly used for any sort of *Appoint-*
ment, or *Ordination*, or *Election*, as this *Au-*
thor knows, and in *Cases* in which the *Ap-*
pointer, or *Chuser* is one single Person; and
 therefore at least it cannot be shewn certain-
 ly that the Word is here used in its *first* Sig-
 nification. 2. The Interpretation of this *Au-*
thor is impossible in this place. For granting
 the Word to have the *Signification* He con-
 tends for, yet there can be no Instance of
 the use of it for any Persons constituting, or
 appointing any *Officers* by the *Suffrages* of
others.

Chap. III. *others.* It is here said of the *Apostles* that They did *χειροτονῶν*, which must mean, according to his own Signification of the word, that they appointed *Presbyters* by the *lifting up of their own Hands*, not by the lifting up of the Hands of *others*. For when this Word is used of the *People*, is it not meant of their electing by the holding up *their own Hands*? And can this *Author* give any instance where it is used of any particular Persons electing, and yet understood of the lifting up the Hands of other Persons, and not of those who are said *χειροτονῶν*? If He cannot, then here it must be understood solely of the *Apostles*; for of them it is affirmed that They, nor the *People* did *χειροτονῶν*. 3. Add to this, that the Word is not here used absolutely, or alone, but it is said that the *Apostles* did ordain *Presbyters* for *them*, i. e. the *People*. Now this *Author* cannot, I believe, produce one Instance where this Word is used for appointing *Officers* for *others*, and yet understood not of those Persons who are said to appoint them, but of those for whom they are said to be appointed.

6. It is alleged that the Brethren, as well as the *Apostles*, and *Elders*, (these three Orders) were concerned in the Council of Jerusalem, *Act. 15. 23.* from whence I infer, with this *Author's* leave, that there was at least some small distinction of Office between these *El-*

ders,

ders, and these *Brethren*, whom He himself Chap. III.
 here makes to be two different, and distinct
Orders. But to reply to this, 1. A great Dif-
 ficulty being raised at *Antioch*, concerning
 the converted *Heathens*, whether they were
 obliged to observe the *Law of Moses*, it was
 agreed that *St. Paul*, and *Barnabas*, with
 some others, should go up to *Jerusalem*: and
 it is manifest that there was no thought in
 them that sent them, of their consulting the
Brethren, or *Laity*, at *Jerusalem*, because v. 2.
 it is said that they should go to the *Apostles*,
 and *Elders*, concerning this *Question*, with-
 out any mention of the *Laity*: who would
 certainly have been named, had there been
 any thought of consulting them. Nay, a-
 greeably to this, it is said, v. 6. that in pur-
 suance of this *Commission*, the *Apostles*, and
Elders, without any mention of the *Brethren*,
 or *Laity*, met together: which is sufficient
 to shew that the whole of this matter was
 to be determined by their *Authority*. 2. The
whole Church is indeed mentioned, v. 22. and
 the *Brethren*, v. 23. as joyning in the Reso-
 lution taken by the *Apostles*, and *Elders*: but
 the former Observation sheweth that this is
 not to be supposed to imply any equal, or
 joyned *Authority* in them, because upon this
 supposition *Paul*, and *Barnabas* would have
 been at first directed to them; and any one
 may see there is no need of understanding it
 so.

Chap. III. so. For all that can be fairly collected from hence is, that the *Christian People*, as far as could be known, acquiesced in, and were well satisfied with, this determination of the *Apostles* and *Elders*: and that accordingly in the *Letter* written, the *Brethren* were joyned with the *Apostles*, and *Elders*, because it would be a great satisfaction to the *Churches* to which it was sent, to know that there was an universal agreement of the *Christians* at *Jerusalem* in this *Decision* of the *Apostles*. This is reason sufficient for their being joyn'd with the *Apostles*, and *Elders*, in this *Affair*: and therefore it cannot be shewn from hence that they pretended to any *Authority* in it.

3. The *Laity* at *Jerusalem* were as much in need of the *Directions*, and *Guidance* of the *Apostles*, as the *Laity* of other *Churches*: and cannot be supposed to be at all qualified to decide *Controversies*, and nice *Questions*.

4. The joyning them with the *Apostles*, as this *Author* doth, destroys his own *Scheme*, and overthrows his own *Principles*: for it gives the *Laity* of one *Church* that *Power* of laying *Impositions* on their *Brethren*, and sending *Decrees* to the *Laity* of other *Churches*, which this *Author* hath utterly denied, and zealously opposed: and consequently cannot be reasonable, even in his own *Judgment*.

5. As to the point of *Ordination*, nothing can be collected from hence: and it is manifest from

from the *Epistles* to *Timothy*, and *Titus*, that the *Apostles* made no scruple of giving their *Orders* concerning the management of that, without consulting, or advising with the *Laity*, or using their Names to give any additional Authority to what they thought fit to be done. Chap. III.

7. It is pleaded, that the *Apostles* thought it their *Duty* to give an *Account* of their *Actions* to the *People*, as *St. Peter* did, *Act. II. 4.* I am indeed ashamed, and astonished, to read such *Expressions* concerning the *Apostles*. For, 1. This *Author* might as well say that the *People* who were to be guided, instructed, and directed by the *Apostles* in the nature of *Christianity*, and their own *Duty* were the *Judges* of the *Apostles* themselves, and might call them to an account for their management of themselves in their *Office*, to which they were called, and in which they were directed, by *God* himself: a *Business* which the *People* were not at all qualified for, and of which they never thought. 2. If it was the *Duty* of the *Apostles* to give an account of themselves to the *People*, it was their *Duty* equally all over the *Christian* World: for their relation extended itself to all Churches. But it is absurd to put such an impossible Task as this upon them: and therefore this could be no part of their *Duty*. 3. The behaviour of the *Apostles* towards

Chap. III. the *Laity*, was never out of *Duty*, in such sense as if the *Laity* were the *Judges* of their *Actions*, and could demand an *Account* from them (which is the only *Sense* that can serve the purpose of this *Author*;) tho' it may be said to be out of *Duty*, as it is the *Duty* of all *Superiors*, to condescend to the *Weaknesses* and *Prejudices* of their *Inferiors*, and to endeavour to give them *Ease*, and *Satisfaction*, in *Points* which they had otherwise no *Obligation* to lay before them. The *Apostles* might think it their *Duty*, in this sense, frequently to justify themselves from those *Imputations* which *Evil*, or *Weak Men* laid upon them; and which would, otherwise, have render'd them the less capable of doing service in the *Church*. But this sense of the *Expression* here used serves not the purpose of this *Author*. 4. If any one please to turn to the place here cited by Him, *Act. 11*, He will find that *St. Peter* was so far from thinking himself oblig'd to give an account of his *Actions* to the *People*, that He did not do it to the whole *Church*, nor as from any *Obligation*, as He ought to have done, according to this *Author*, or ever thought of doing it at all, till He was taxed by a particular *Sect* of them, as if He had done an unjustifiable thing, *v. 2. 3.* that upon this *Accusation* He willingly endeavour'd to give these prejudiced Persons satisfaction, which He doth by

by a bare relation of the matter of Fact, Chap. III.
v. 4. and without any acknowledgment of
their *Authority* to call Him to account. And
what there is in this Procedure more than a
Willingness that all should be satisfied, and
easie, and no Offences continued in the way
of the Gospel, let any one judge. 5. I am
sure it may as well be argued that the *Apo-*
stles thought it their Duty to give the *Hea-*
thens, or *Unbelieving Jews* an account of their
Actions, because when they were taxed by
them of making a Disturbance, and Altera-
tion in the World, they thought fit to give
them an account of their Proceedings, and to
lay before them the great Reasons they had
to preach the Gospel of Christ. 6. Granting
that the *Apostles* thought it their Duty to give
an account of their *Behaviour* in some Points,
it is manifest from the *Epistles* to *Timothy* and
Titus, that they did not think it their Duty
to do so in the affair of Ordination of *Presby-*
ters, and *Pastors* in the Churches of *Chri-*
stians.

Thirdly, It is alleged by this Author, in fa-
vour of the Church-Power of the Laity, that
in the days of the *Apostles* the Office of Preach-
ing was in common, p. 132, 133. and the *Lai-*
ty baptized, p. 135, 136. and from hence,
likewise, He would lead People to think that
there is no Office claimed by the Clergy which

A brief Defense of

Chap. III. the *Laity* have not a *Right* to perform. To this I answer in general, that I would not have the *Reader* imagine from hence that it is this *Author's* constant Opinion that there was no distinction of *Offices* in those Days: for He himself, as I have observ'd before, makes the *Apostles*, *Elders*, and *Brethren* in the *Council* of *Jerusalem*, to be *three Orders*: and if *three Orders*, then there was a distinction and settled difference in the *Offices* of *Elders*, and *Laity*: and consequently some *Offices* appropriated to the *former* which the *latter* did not pretend to perform. Or if He will not allow this, I hope the *Reader* will, notwithstanding his *Affirmations*, consider that *St. Paul* hath made a difference between the *Presbyters* of *Ephesus*, and the *Flocks* over which they were placed, *Act. 20. 28.* and in his *Epistles* to *Timothy*. But it is necessary to be more particular, and to examine every *Passage* here alleged by this *Author*. As to the *Passages*, therefore, cited for the *Laity's* *Preaching*, as this *Author* is pleased to call it, the *Reader* will find upon Examination,

I. That some of them are nothing but such *Exhortations* to the *Laity*, as would be very proper at this Day, when there is no such *Custom* pretended as their *Preaching* in *Public Assemblies*. Thus, *Heb. 3. 13.* the *Christians* in a state of *Persecution* are called upon

upon to *exhort one another, while it is called to day, &c. i. e.* to encourage one another to a constant, and couragious Confession of the Faith of *Christ*, and this for fear any of them should be over-power'd by *Persecution* so far as to be brought to deny their *Master*. Now what is this to the *Preaching* publicly in the *Congregation*? Or, who ever deny'd such *Exhortation*, and mutual Admonition to be even the *Duty* of all *Christians*, whether *Clergy*, or *Laity*? Thus again, *Heb. 10. 24, 25.* the *Laity* are indeed exhorted to consider one another to the *exciting*, and *quickning* their *Love*, and *good Works*; *not to forsake the assembling of themselves together* (merely out of fear of their *Persecutors*) *but to exhort one another, i. e.* as I understand it, in connexion with what goes before, and what follows, to encourage one another to meet together for *Religious Offices*, notwithstanding the *Persecution* of their *Adversaries*. For it is *opposed* to the forsaking their *Religious Assemblies*: which *Opposition* is not preserved if the Words be interpreted thus, *Not forsaking the assembling of your selves together, but exhorting one another when you are assembled.* On the contrary it is very well preserved, if they be interpreted thus, *Not forsaking the assembling of your selves together, but encouraging one another to this assembling as an open acknowledgment of your Master*

Chap. III. by meeting for his Service, and Honour, for joint-Prayer, and the Celebration of the *Lord's-Supper*. And that this neglect of *Assembling* themselves together is, at least, one sort, or degree of that *Apostacy* and *Sin* He speaks of in the following Verses is, I think, very probable from his connecting his terrifying Reasons against wilful *Apostacy* immediately to this injunction *not to forsake the assembling themselves together*, as Reasons against the Neglect of *Assembling* themselves just now mention'd; and from his describing this *Apostacy*, v. 29. to be *the accounting the Blood of the Covenant* (as the *Wine* in the *Lord's-Supper* is peculiarly called in the Gospel) a *Common, or Unholy thing*: i. e. the avoiding and flying from the Participation of it, as if they had a mind to make their *Adversaries* believe it was a thing they no more valued, or regarded, than their *Adversaries* themselves. And the Practice of some who had thus out of fear denied *Christ* by refusing to meet as his *Disciples*, to worship, and remember their *Lord*, might justly give occasion to the *Apostle* to be zealous in his injunctions upon this Head; and is a sufficient Reason why He should press them to *exhort* one another to so necessary an acknowledgment of *Christ*; and urge it upon them by shewing the Guilt, and Sin of those who wilfully refused, out of fear, to meet their
Fellow.

Fellow-Christians for the *Worship* of their *Ma-Chap.III.*

ster, and the Religious Remembrance of him in the *Lord's-Supper*. 1. Therefore, if this *Interpretation* be just, here is not the least intimation of any such thing as *Preaching* in the *Assemblies* of *Christians*, allow'd in, or required of the *Laiety*: And that it is just, I appeal to the *Reasons* here given. I add that they who favour the *Interpretation* of this *Author* can say nothing for it, but that it is a *possible* meaning of the Words; not that it is plainly, and manifestly the *Sense* of them: which alone is a sufficient Reason against building such a Point as this upon them, even tho' nothing more could be said of the *Interpretation* I have given, but that it is likewise *possible*. 2. Supposing the *Interpretation* of this *Author* to be just, no more can be inferr'd from it but that the *Apostle* did advise the *Lay-Christians*, in times of *Persecution*, when they were met together for *Religious Worship*, to speak to one another, and to encourage one another against *Apostasy*, and the *Fear* of Men. Now this is very consistent with the *Presbyters* having an appropriated Office in these very *Assemblies*: and I see not, for instance, why the persecuted *Protestants* in *France* might not, even in their *Religious Assemblies*, have made it one part of their Business, to speak comfortably to one another, and to encourage one

Chap. III. another to Perseverance, without ever sup-
 posing themselves possess'd of the same Office
 which their *Pastors*, and *Preachers* exercised,
 3. And that this Injunction of the *Apostles*
 did not in the least derogate from the appro-
 priated Office of the *Pastors* of these very
Christians, even in his own Opinion, is ma-
 nifest from this very *Epistle*, in which these
 same *Christians* who are here called upon to
 exhort one another, are called upon, *Ch. 13.*
v. 7. to remember, or have regard to, those
 who were their *Leaders*, and *Directors*, and
 spoke to them the Word of God, i. e. their
Preachers, and, *v. 17.* to be in some sort of
Subjection, and to pay all reasonable Deference
 to their *Spiritual Leaders*: whose peculiar
 Business is here declared, viz. to watch over
 the Souls of the *Laity* here spoken of, as Per-
 sons that must give an account. So that in
 this very Church there were *Preachers*, and
Guides distinct from the *Laity*, to whom the
Laity were here required to attend; and to
 be advised, and persuaded by them accord-
 ing to this *Author* himself (*p. 161.*) from
 whence I argue that it is highly improbable
 that the same *Apostle* should in another
 place stir up these same *Lay-Christians* to
Preach to one another in their *Public As-*
semblies.

Again,

Again, It is in the same place alleged that *Chap. III.*
 his Duty of Teaching and Admonishing one another in their Assemblies is required of the Laity on the highest Motives, such as, that the Word of God may dwell in you in all Wisdom, Col. 3. 16. and that you may comfort and edify one another, 1 Thes. 5. 11. Now, 1. Neither of these Texts is by St. Paul intended as a Motive to any thing at all, as any one may see by turning to them: and therefore not Motive to the Laity, to Preach in Public Assemblies. The former of them is an Injunction by itself, independent on what goes before, that the Word of God should dwell richly in the Colossians in all Wisdom: And the latter is likewise a Command to the Laity distinct, and of a larger extent than that of exhorting one another which goes before it, and makes it their Duty to edify, and profit one another by all Methods agreeable to their several Stations, and to the Christian Religion; and therefore is not a Motive to the Practice of the foregoing Injunction, but a new Injunction added to it. The Motive to both these Duties is taken from Christ's Love to us expressed in the Verses before. But, 2. Neither of these Texts can with any colour of Argument be apply'd to any thing but the private behaviour of Christians, distinct from that in more Public Assemblies. What the Apostle recommends to the Colossi-

Chap. III. *ans* in the former is that the *Word of God* may dwell in them, which can bear no relation to their *Preaching the Word of God in Public Assemblies*, but rather implies that they have heard it at those places preached by others. He advises them farther in the same *Verse*, to *teach*, and *instruct* themselves; which I wonder this *Author* did not allege. But how is it? By *Psalms*, and *Hymns*, and *Spiritual Songs*; to keep up a sense of Religion in their Minds by this Method. The same He recommends to the *Ephesians*, *Eph. 5. 19.* where He expresseth it by *speaking to themselves in Psalms, and Hymns, &c.* In the latter He exhorts the *Thessalonian Christians* to *edify* one another, to do one another all true and real Service, which certainly they may be exhorted to do without supposing *Preachers* in *Public Assemblies*, unless this *Author's* notion of *Edification* be framed according to the mistake of some *Modern Christians*, and not to the *Scriptures* themselves. 3. These *Injunctions* are in the midst of others, all of a private Nature, and not concerning any thing relating to *Public Worship*: and therefore it is unreasonable to apply these to that matter, abruptly, and without any the least indication in the *Texts* themselves to that purpose. 4. In both these *Epistles* there is a manifest Distinction made between the *Laitie*, and their *Pastors*, and *Public Teachers*; and there-

Therefore no reason for St. Paul so zealously to enjoin the *Laity* to teach in *Public Assemblies*, as this *Author* supposeth He doth. He himself, tho' for another end, makes mention of *Archippus* amongst the *Colossians*, to whom St. Paul sends a *Message* in this *Epistle* (just as He doth *Salutations* to others) that He should take heed to the *Ministry* He had received, to fulfil it. From whence it is evident that He had an Office, and Duty incumbent on Him, distinct from those of the *Laity*. And in the *Epistle* to the *Thessalonians* now cited, in the very next Words following those quoted by this *Author*, St. Paul exhorteth them to take notice of those who labour amongst them, and are over them in the Lord, and instruct them; and to esteem them, exceedingly, in love, for their works sake: Words, which, I think, sufficiently imply an appropriated Office of *Pastors* and *Teachers* in those Days. These Passages, therefore, cited by this *Author* for the *Laity's* preaching in the days of the *Apostles* concern only private *Exhortations*, and *Admonitions*; and so are nothing to his purpose.

2. Others of them will be found to be only Directions how those *Persons* should manage themselves in the *Public Assemblies*, who had *Extraordinary*, and *Miraculous Gifts*, and particularly *Revelations* from the *Spirit of God* in those first Days: and such as cannot

not

Chap. III. not be of any Concern in these Days, where there are no such *Revelations*. Thus if we examine 1 Cor. 14. we shall find that the only Reason for so many speaking in the *Public Assemblies* was that it pleased God to give to many of them *Miraculous Gifts*, and *Extraordinary Revelations*, Ch. 12. 8, 9, 10, which is a sufficient ground for any one to speak in *Public* to such as acknowledge the Divine Inspiration of what they have to say. And when He exhorts them, v. 12. to labour to excel for the edifying of the Church (which this *Author* allegeth) this is his way of doing it, Since you are so much for the *Extraordinary Gifts* of the Spirit, desire and labour after such, and after such an use of them, as may be most for the common Benefit of you all. And what is this to any other Church, or Time, in the World, in which there are not such Gifts, and Revelations? When other Churches are like the Church at Corinth at this time, let their *Public Assemblies* be managed according to this Chapter. So if we look into the other Text alleged, viz. 1 Pet. 4. 10. and compare it with the Verse foregoing, we shall find either, 1. That it is a Direction to those who were peculiarly called to the Office of speaking in public, as it may be thought from its being join'd with the Office of *Ministring* in the same Verse: and if so, let who will be the

Per-

Persons called to this Office, this very Passage proves a *Confinement* of this Office. For it is plainly St. Peter's design, v. 9. to exhort all amongst them to perform their several Duties, and exercise their several Gifts, for the common good of the Church: and v. 10. to direct those whose Office it was to speak, to do it as the Oracles of God. From whence I argue against the design for which this Text is produced by this Author, that it appears from this very Text that the Office of Preaching, or speaking in public Assemblies, was not a common Office, but confined to some particular Persons. Or, 2. We shall find that the Words are spoken of a particular Extraordinary Gift of the Holy Spirit given in those Days; yet so as to require the prudent management of the Person who had received it, for the good of the Church. This seems probable from its being called by the name of *χρησμία* in the Verse before. And if so, they have no place in the present State of the Church: nor can any thing be argued from them.

Add to this, that in these very Epistles out of which these Passages are quoted, there is a manifest distinction made of Ecclesiastical Officers from the Laity, and a manifest Confinement of the Office of Teaching, or Preaching in our sense of the Word.

St. Paul

Chap. III. St. Paul in the first *Epistle* to the *Corinthians* when He is speaking of the wonderful Gifts in this Church, (which was the only ground for the speaking of so many in the *Assemblies*) himself makes a difference of Gifts bestow'd upon different Persons, *Ch. 12. 8, 9, 10.* and a distinction of Offices in *v. 28, 29, 30.* by which means He effectually sets Limits to the Offices here mention'd; and provides that even of those Persons who had extraordinary Gifts none should speak in public but such whose Gifts, or Revelations peculiarly fitted them for it. So that there is included in his account of the several Gifts and Offices then in that Church a Confinement of these several Gifts and Offices to particular Persons. But to put it beyond all doubt, this same *Apostle* who is here introduced as a Patron of the whole *Laiety* preaching doth himself ask, *1st. 12. v. 29.* Are all *Apostles*? Are all *Prophets*? Are all *Teachers*? The *Apostle* answers himself, No by asking the Question, and also asserts in the same Chapter that God hath appointed some to one Office, and some to another. Are all *Teachers*? Yes, this *Author* answers in express contradiction to St. Paul in this Chapter, All were *Teachers* in those Days. But the Reader, I hope, will consider whether He had not better believe St. Paul as

boud

out the State of the Church at that time, than this *Writer*. In the *first Epistle* of St. Peter, out of which the other Passage is quoted, there is likewise a most manifest Distinction made between the *Presbyters*, and their *Flock*, *ch. 5. v. 1, 2, 3. i. e.* between *Clergy*, and *Laity*: the former of which are called upon as *Shepherds* to feed the latter; and the latter are styl'd the *Flock* committed to the Care of the former: and how every one of the *Flock* can have the Office of the *shepherd* of the *Flock*, I leave to this *Author* to judge.

3. If we examine the remaining *Instances* this *Author* produceth of the preaching of the *Laity*, we shall find that these likewise are of no importance in the present *Debate*, as they only concern the preaching of the *Gospel* where it never was heard of, or the endeavouring to convince *Infidels* of the Truth and Reasonableness of the *Christian Religion*.

or, 1. Supposing that all they were *Laymen* who were scatter'd abroad upon the Persecution rais'd on St. Stephen's account, *Act.*

4. it is manifest that they were scatter'd to Countries where there were none to reach the *Gospel* to *Infidels*: but themselves: and it is manifest that they had the power of working *Miracles* to justify themselves to any who should ask them by what *Authority* they preached a new *Doctrin*, and set them-

themselves to alter the *Faith*, and *Practi*
 of the World about them. I say it is man
 felt they had this power of Miracles, if w
 may judge of the rest by *Philip*, v. 6. an
 by the *Success* they had, *ch. 11. 21.* and b
 the constant attendance of *Miracles* upon
 those who were the first *Preachers* of the
Gospel; and by the Expression used concern
 ing them, that *the hand of the Lord wa*
with him. Let, therefore those *Lay-men* wh
 would argue from hence put themselves in
 to the condition of these *Brethren*. Let th
Providence of God cast them into *Countrie*
 of *Infidels* who have no other opportunit
 of hearing of *Christ* but by them; and this
 self, in my opinion, will give them a *Com*
mission, if there be any hope of success, t
 endeavour to convert, as many as they can
 to the *faith* of *Jesur Christ*: and if they hav
 the same power of working *miracles*, the
 need not doubt of the same success. Bu
 what is this to the *Case* of *Christians* already
 converted? and what doth this towards th
 discovery of the practice of the *Laitie* in the *A*
semblies of the first *Christians* when the *Church*
 came to be in a more settled condition? For
 it cannot be right to argue, *Lay-men* preache
 the *Gospel* in places where there were no other
 to preach it, and in order to convert *Unbeliever*
 were enabled to work miracles. Therefore
Lay-men who have no such power to shew

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may teach publicly in the more regular
Congregations of Christians, in which there
are others whose Office it is to do it. But,
2. Why must it be supposed that these
Persons scatter'd abroad were all *Lay-men*,
when *v. 1.* of this *Chapter* it is represented
that the Persecution was so great that all
were scatter'd abroad, *except the Apostles*.
If all except the *Apostles*, then many of those
scatter'd abroad must needs have been Per-
sons peculiarly set apart for the Office of
Teaching and Preaching. And why must it
be supposed that Men of such Qualificati-
ons as *Philip*, by being made *Deacons*, were
kept from any Office of more consequence
in the *Church*, not rather that they were
authorized by the *Apostles* to *Preach*, and
Baptize? 3. To make it highly probable
that many of these were before this autho-
rized to be *Preachers*, I allege the Testimony
of *Clemens Romanus*, a *Writer* contemporary
with the *Apostles*, and who hath the Hap-
piness to be much regarded by this *Author*.
He knew those Times as well as any one:
and He assures us that the *Apostles* constituted
the very *First-fruits* of the *Converted Persons*
to be *Bishops* (or *Presbyters*) and *Deacons*;
and consequently many were appropriated
immediately to *Ecclesiastical Offices*, *Ep. ad*
Cor. p. 99. Ed. Lond. But, 4. Let these
Preachers be what this *Author* pleaseth, He
ought

Chap. III. ought to remember that after they had converted a good number at *Antioch* to the *Christian Faith*, *Barnabas* was sent from *Jerusalem* to establish, and settle them: and *He*, and *Paul* taught there a whole Year, *Act.* 11. 22, 26. and that some time after they returned again to *Antioch*, and themselves appointed *Presbyters* in every Church, *Act.* 14. 23. from whence it appears that all things which the *Apostles* thought fit could not be done at first; that something more was necessary than the Election of the *Laity* to constitute any one a *Presbyter*; and that there is such an appropriated Office as that of a *Presbyter* by the Will of the *Apostles*; contrary to many of this *Author's* Positions. And now if *He* could prove that after this appointment of *Presbyters* by the *Apostles* the *Laity* of their *Congregations* exercised the *Functions* which it was their proper business to exercise, this would do his *Cause* some Service: but nothing less than this can be of any use to it.

The like Account likewise may be given of the *Brethren* mentioned, *Phil.* 1. 14. who spake the Word with Boldness, and preached *Christ*. For, 1. The *Brethren in the Lord* were probably *Authorized Preachers*, called to that Office, and commissioned to execute it, at least, those of them who preached *Christ out of good will*, v. 15. for the preaching of the

the others *St. Paul* doth not seem to approve of, tho' He rejoyceth at the Conversion of any Unbelievers by means of it, v. 16. Nay, these very Persons might have been *Authorized*, tho' they now exercised their Office from no very good Principles. Here is no *Argument* to prove these *Preachers* to have been *Lay-men* but the calling them *Brethren*, which is no *Argument* at all: for so is *Timothy* called, *Heb. 13. 23.* *Tychicus* *Eph. 6. 21.* *St. Luke*, or some other *Ecclesiastic*, *2 Cor. 8. 18.* and, not to name any more, *Epaphroditus* in this very *Epistle*, ch. 2. 25. With what reason therefore can this *Author* argue from hence, when it is not at all probable that the Persons here spoken of were *Lay-men*. 2. Supposing them to have been *Lay-men*, they only endeavour'd to convert those *Infidels* they had opportunity to speak with, to the *Christian Faith*, and who had no other way of hearing of the *Gospel* but by them. What is this to their performing the Office of *Presbyters*, and *Pastors* in *Congregations* of *Christians* already established; about which only the present *Debate* is. 3. The first Verse of this very *Epistle* proves a distinction of *Offices*, and the Settlement of *Presbyters*, and *Deacons* in all *Churches*, as soon as the numbers of *Christians* increased, and there was an opportunity of doing it, which helps to overthrow the Principles of this *Author*.

From all that hath been here said it appears that all these *Passages* (which I have particularly consider'd) prove nothing to his purpose; and that it unhappily falls out, that those very Writings of the *Apostles* out of which He hath collected these *Texts*, afford us sufficient demonstration of that *Distinction* between the *Clergy* and *Laity* (as soon as it could possibly be fixed) against which this *Author* hath shewn so much prejudiced, and partial Zeal. And for a farther Demonstration of it I must refer the *Reader* to the former *Chapters*.

I come now to those *Instances* given by this *Author* of the *Laity's* Baptizing in the days of the *Apostles*, that we may judge what Service these can be supposed to do his *Cause*. But before He comes to his *Instances*, He observes that the *Command* given to the *Apostles* to make *Disciples*, and Baptize, *Mat.* 28. 19. doth not exclude the *Laity*, p. 135. To which I answer, that I do not found the *Exclusion* of the *Laity* from any *Offices* upon this *Command*, but upon the *Will* of the *Apostles*, sufficiently declared afterwards, as I have explained this matter in the foregoing *Chapter*. The *Question* is whether the *Apostles* did not think fit for *Order's* sake to set apart a particular *Order* of Men, for the Performance of these *Offices*: for if they did, this

is an *Exclusion* of *others* from the Performance of them. I have shewn that none of the *Instances* produced by this *Author* prove that it was the *Office* of the *Laity* to preach in the *Public Congregations* in the days of the *Apostles*: And as to *Baptizing*, I proceed to consider what He hath here produced.

1. *Cornelius*, and his Household were baptized by the *Brethren* which accompanied *St. Peter*, *Act.* 10. 23, 48. Now, 1. Here were *many* Persons gathered together, as it is expressed, *v.* 27, all now to be *Baptized*, which was a just occasion for *St. Peter* to put the work upon others. 2. These *others*, whoever they were, never thought themselves qualified for the Work, nor did they go about to do it, till *St. Peter* commanded it to be done: And consequently this was as effectually *St. Peter's* own *Act*, as if He had commanded his own Hands to bear a part in it. 3. *St. Peter's* Commission to these Persons, at this time, bears them out in the *Baptizing* these Persons, but here is nothing that implies that either they look'd upon this as their *Office*, or ever did the like either before, or after without the like *occasional Commission*. 4. This Instance, therefore, can bear out no *Lay-men* who *Baptize* any, unless such as do it on a like extraordinary occasion, and by order of such an *Ecclesiastical Officer* as undoubtedly hath Authority to give such an

Chap. III. Order. For these Persons Baptizing at St. Peter's Request, as this Author expresseth it, is so far from serving his purpose, that it overthrows it, as it shews that they did not think of doing it without his Order. 5. Much less can this Instance shew that the Apostles did not, when the Churches came to be in a more settled Estate, and it was time to establish matters of Order and Regularity, themselves confine this Office to that Order of Ecclesiastical Officers which they appointed in the Church: and therefore it cannot be of the least Service to this Author. Let Lay-men baptize in the like Case, I know nothing to hinder, or forbid them.

2. Great Numbers were baptized in Samaria, upon the Preaching of Philip, Act. 8. 12. which must be done by the Laity, because there were none but Lay-men here: or Deacons in whose Commission there was nothing contained but the business of looking after the Poor, p. 136. But, 1. It is a great Presumption in this Author to affirm that there were none in the Church at that time, except the Apostles, peculiarly appointed to particular Ecclesiastical Offices. 2. Philip himself might have been authorized by them to the Office of Preaching, and Baptizing, and several others of like Qualifications. 3. I have shewn before from Clemens Romanus, that the Apostles appointed and ordained many

ny of the very first converted Persons to Ec-Chap.III.
clestial Offices. 4. Supposing the Persons
 who *baptized* not to have been peculiarly set
 apart to that Office, the Miracles wrought
 by *Philip* were a sufficient Justification of
 what He should think fitting to be done on
 such an extraordinary occasion as this. 5. If
 there were none but *Lay-men* present, then
 there were no others at this time to *Baptize*
 the Numbers here spoken of. And so they
 performed this necessary Work, because
 there was no body to perform it but them-
 selves. 6. Let *Lay-men* therefore convert *In-*
fidels, and *Baptize* upon the like occasion;
 and, I may add, let Miracles be wrought to
 shew they come not without being sent by
 God, and I will undertake this Instance will
 bear them out. 7. If the *Apostles* did, after
 this, appropriate this Office to a particular sort
 of Men, this is a sufficient Direction to all
 serious Persons in all *ordinary Cases*, and to
 all who are concerned for Order, and *Regu-*
larity in the Church of Christ.

3. *Ananias* baptized *St. Paul* himself. But
 it is fit to consider that what was done in
 this Case was done by the particular Com-
 mand, and extraordinary Direction of God
 himself: and therefore nothing can be argu'd
 from it to ordinary Cases; nothing against
 the appointment of the *Apostles* when the af-
 fairs of the Church came to be settled. Let

Chap. III. any *Lay-man* Baptize, when He hath the Commission *Ananias* here had from Heaven: and this will bear him out. But otherwise he must seek for other Arguments to justify him.

4. Three Thousand were baptized at once, *Act*, 2. 41. which could not be done by the *Apostles* alone. Now, 1. This was done by the direction of the *Apostles* at that very time; and therefore nothing can be argued from hence in favour of any *Lay-men* who should do the same, without the same Direction; without which none of the *Lay-men* here concerned would have thought of doing it. 2. If the *Apostles* alone could not have done this, without hindring something of greater Consequence, then, according to this *Author* himself, this is an Instance of the *Laity's* baptizing only in case of *Necessity*, and this by the direction of the *Apostles*: And what can be argued from hence for *Baptism* by *Lay-men*, unless in the like *Circumstances*, in which I heartily allow of it. 3. What the *Apostles* order'd in so extraordinary a Case, in the very first beginning of the Church, doth not at all shew what their Will was, about the Office of *Baptizing*, when it was due time to settle such Points.

5. St. Paul declareth He was not sent to Chap. III.
 Baptize, but to *Preach*. Our Saviour Baptized not, but his Disciples: and from hence this *Author* thinks it probable that *the servile Office of washing the filth of the Flesh was left to the meanest and lowest*. Now, 1. The only Reason why St. Paul, and the *Highest* in the Church did it not, was because they would not be hinder'd in their great work of *converting Unbelievers*, and because they had those about them, whom they appointed to this business, not because they thought it a *servile Work*. 2. This *Author* unwarily by this way of arguing proves the *Laitie* to have been the *lowest and meanest* in the Church, by shewing that they Baptized; and affirming that to Baptize was a *servile Work, left to the meanest, and lowest*; and so contradicts his own Principles, and Assertions in other places, in which He hath labour'd to place them even above the *Apostles* themselves: so much with his Zeal, and Indignation against some particular Men transported him beyond himself. Otherwise, He would have contended that this Office belong'd to the *Clergy* peculiarly, or at least He would not have envied them the Execution of it, since He hath shewn that it was a *servile Work, and left to the meanest, and lowest* in the Church. For 3. He hath furnished me with this unanswerable Argument against himself, *Baptism was left*

Chap. III *left to the lowest and meanest in the Church.*
 But the *Clergy* are, according to Himself, the *lowest and meanest* Persons in the Church. Therefore *Baptism* is *their* Work peculiarly.

To conclude this *Head*, All his *Instances* of *Lay-Baptisms* in the days of the *Apostles* are taken from the very first unsettled condition of the *Church* before the *Apostles* could have opportunity to establish any thing of *Order* in it; and from *Cases* of *Necessity*, or very *Extraordinary*, from which nothing can follow to the advantage of his *Cause*, or any thing against the *Confinement* of this *Office* to a particular *Order* of Men by the *Apostles* themselves.

Fourthly, To confirm what He hath alleged for the practice of the *Lay* in the days of the *Apostles*, He likewise appeals to two *Authors* amongst the *Antients*.

One of these He calls *Pseudo-Ambrose*, 135. but how *antient* He was, i. e. how capable of being a *Witness* of what was done in those Days, He doth not let his *Reader* know; for fear, probably, that they should have *Sense* enough to judge that a Man who was not born till above *Two Hundred Years* after the Death of all the *Apostles*, did not deserve the Name of a *very antient Author* and could not justly be cited as a *Witness*.

what was done near Three Hundred Years Chap. IV.
before his own time. Supposing therefore
that he saith, that *all at first taught, and bap-*
tized. 1. It is manifest that He cannot say
this as a *Witness* of what was done in the
first days of the *Church*, because He lived at
great a distance from them, that his *Testi-*
mony, considered as a *Testimony*, cannot be
admitted by any *Laws of Equity* in the
World. 2. It is as manifest that He only
collected this from those *Instances* alleged by
his very *Author* out of the *New Testament*;
the force of which I have now examined:
and so his saying this, as his own Judgment,
signifieth no more than this *Author's* saying
himself; and so adds not the least weight
to the *Argument*, even granting that He was
of the same opinion with this *Author* in the
consequences He draws from hence. But, 3.
it is manifest from the *same*, and other pa-
rallel Sentences of this *antient Writer*, that
he intended not to infer any thing, from
these *Instances* of what was done in the very
first unsettled condition of the *Church*, against
the *Apostolical Confinement* of Ordination par-
ticularly to a peculiar Order of Men: but
with himself in effect acknowledge, and
 plead for such a *Confinement*: as this *Author*
must but know, because He must have
in his Words often cited by the *Advocates*
the Cause of *Presbyters*.

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The other of these is *Clemens Romanus*, very Antient Writer indeed, pompously cited by this Author, p. 157. as if He were perfectly of his own Principles, under the title of an Author *antienter* than some of the Writings even of the New Testament, and read with them publicly in the Churches, &c. Let us see, therefore, what is alleged from Him, because all must grant that it ought to be of importance in this Cause.

1. This Author saith, that this Antient Writer calls the *Censures* of the Church, the *Commands of the People*. The only Passage He can mean (for He hath not quoted the Page) is that p. 125. Ed. Lond. in which the good Man is proposing a Method of healing that *Schism*, and *Contention* which was come to a great height amongst the *Corinthians*, and his Advice is this. *Is there any among you of a truly generous and charitable Spirit, thoroughly moved with a desire of healing the Quarrel? Let him say thus, If these Heresies and Contentions are on my account, I am ready to depart, and be gone, or to do any thing in order to heal them that the rest of my Brethren shall think fit to order: (then follow immediately these Words) only let the Flock of Christ together with the Presbyters set over live in peace. And He adds, Whoever has the Christian Spirit to make such an Offer of this, will gain to himself an extraordinary*

ree of Glory with God: and every place will be Chap. III.
glad to receive a Person of so peaceable and excellent a Disposition. Now, 1. I say, This Advice might be given supposing the People to have no more Ecclesiastical Authority than what they enjoy at this Day; for they themselves are the only Judges of what will make themselves easy, and quiet; and if an End cannot be put to a Quarrel amongst Fellow-Christians without the Departure of such, and such particular Persons, they themselves are the only Persons fit to declare this. 2. This Author himself cannot suppose that here is any Authority at all lodged in the People in these Words, because if there be any, it is an Authority to send away a Neighbour, and Fellow-Christian from his usual Habitation (i. e. in some Cases, to ruin him and his Family) whenever they shall please to be so humourfome as not to be able to live peaceably by Him: nay, to send away the very best, and most charitable Persons amongst them; for to such as these the Departure here spoken of is proposed. Now I ask this Author, whether He will be the Patron of such a pernicious Authority as this, in any Congregation, or Neighbourhood of Lay-Christians. If He would; then is He, notwithstanding all his Pretences, the Patron of Tyranny. If He would not; then cannot He head from these words for any Authority at all

Chap. III. all in the People, because if they give them any *Authority*, it is the *Authority* before-mentioned. 3. Had St. Clement meant to signify that any such *Authority* was of right in the People, the proper way for him to have expressed himself was to say, that the People had a right to meet, and to command the departure of any Person at whom they were uneasy, and this Person was obliged in conscience to obey their Commands: but He saith no such thing; and therefore it is probable knew of no such Method of putting an end to *Quarrels* and *Divisions*. 4. It is manifest that it was not his Design to propose this as an usual Method, or to intimate any such *Authority* originally in the People, but to recommend to the best disposed Persons amongst them an extraordinary Method to which they were not obliged in strictness of Right, or rigor of Justice, viz. to shew their great regard to Peace by making this voluntary Offer to the People, *If our presence be the occasion of perpetuating Unchristian Heats and Diffensions, we are ready to depart, or do any thing you shall think fit to command in order to heal this great Quarrel, and Division.* Before this Offer it is plain He did not think the People had any right to order any such thing because if he did, there was not the least occasion for his advising that such an Offer should be made: and if after it they had any

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Power, it was only in this particular Instance, and over these particular Persons, who voluntarily were to make the Offer, and to give this Power; and consequently it is no more Power than any Congregation, or Neighbourhood of Christians hath at this Day, if any of their Fellow-Christians think fit to put themselves under their disposal upon the like occasion. 5. We see in this very Sentence (which this Author thought not for his purpose to quote at length, but rather chose to take out of it a Word or two which depend entirely upon the rest) a manifest Distinction in those very early Days between the Flock of Christ, i. e. the Laity, and the Presbyters their Pastors: and a Superiority (in some sense) of the latter over the former then acknowledged, and professed.

2. St. Clemens Romanus is quoted again by this Author, p. 158. as saying that the Apostles ordained with the consent of the whole Church, expressed, as he saith, by holding up the Hands of the People. Now, 1. This Ancient Writer doth not say that the Apostles ordained any with the Consent of the Church: but connects the Consent of the Church to the Ordination of Presbyters by other excellent Men after the first Ordinations by the Apostles. Nay, 2. In another place where he speaks of the Ordination of Presbyters by the Apostles, he is far from saying that they ordained Ecclesiastical

Eccelesiastical Officers not without the consent of the Church, that he declares that they *ordained* Persons, the very First-fruits of the *Converts* to *Eccelesiastical Offices* for the sake of those who should *believe* afterwards. Neither doth he speak of any consent of the People as a thing necessary in those *first Ordinations*, but only useth it as an Argument to the *Corinthians* that those *Persons* should not be forcibly cast out of the Exercise of their Office, who had been ordained either by the *Apostles*, or other Excellent Persons, and of whose Ordination the whole Church had at that time expressed a very good liking; and had often since born testimony to them, and who had carry'd themselves unblameably in their Office. *Blondel* indeed (p. 379.) doth strangely, and with a surprizing freedom alter this Sentence, changing the *Accusative Case* into the *Nominative*, and making it part of the foregoing Sentence, against all Rules of Grammar, in order, I suppose, to connect the *consent* of the Church here mention'd to the *Apostolical Order* mention'd before. But as it is, the most that can be collected from it is that when it could be, *Ordinations* were performed in the presence of the People, and a Liberty allow'd them to give in their Testimonies concerning the Behaviour of the Persons to be *ordained* if they had lived amongst them. This is done in our own Church

Church at this time, and I am fully of opinion that is very well it is so; and might be very well, likewise, if a more open, and timely Appeal were made to the *Testimony* of all who may be supposed to know the Persons concerned. But this is not at all to this *Author's* purpose. This makes not them the Judges of their *Qualifications*, nor the Givers of the *Authority* which *Presbyters* have to minister in *God's Church*. For in the first *Epistle to Timothy*, when *St. Paul* had a fair Opportunity of declaring his Mind in this matter, tho' He required that the Persons ordained should be Persons of good Reputation, and so made it necessary for *Timothy* to enquire out their Characters even amongst the *Heathens* themselves; yet He left the final Determination, and the giving the Commission entirely to *Timothy*. Nay, It will as well follow, that the *Heathens* had the Right here pleaded for, in *Ordinations*, as that the *Christian Laity* had it; seeing their *Testimony* also is spoken of by *St. Paul*. 4. It is here acknowledged by this *Author*, that the *Apostles* are said to ordain as *Chief Directors*. This is Favour indeed; and the more because it shews that, according to himself, something more was in their Days requisite than the Peoples appointing a Person to officiate amongst them. If the *Apostles* were the *Chief Directors*, then I am apt to think they found

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Chap. III. out, and nominated the Persons they thought fit to be ordained *Presbyters*, and judged of their *Qualifications*; and that their Commission was so necessary that the Appointment of the People signified nothing without it. The *Peoples* Concern, or *Authority* in this matter was at most no more, than it would be, if a *King* should resolve generally to grant no Commission for the Office of *Justice* or *Peace*, unless to Persons of good Reputation amongst their *Neighbours*, and accordingly grant his *Commissions* in an *Assembly* of the *People*, and give them the liberty of giving in their *Testimonies* concerning the *Character* of the Persons designed by *Him* for that Office. But all must see that this gives not to the *People* the Power of so much as *nominating* the Persons; much less doth it imply that an *Officer* so constituted acts by *Authority* at that time derived from them. Nay, 5. Granting all that this *Author* can think to be imply'd in this Expression of *St. Clement*; the *Right* which this *Author* hath contended for, in the name of the *Laity*, viz. that of appointing and ordaining *Presbyters* in the Church without the interposition of any *Ecclesiastical Officer* can by no means follow from it. For the *Ordination* of the *Apostles*, and of other Excellent Persons, is named in the very Words before it, as something equally necessary at least. 6. I must observe that *St. Clement*

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Clement himself is so exprefs in his *Testimony* concerning the distinction of *Clergy*, and *Laity*, and the *Office* of *Ordination*, in the very first Days, that I fear this *Author* will not be determin'd in this *Controversy* by Him, as He hath not shewn himself willing that his *Reader* should know what that very *Antient Writer* saith on this *Subject*. 1. In the Sentence I had occasion just now to lay before the *Reader*, He mentions the *Flock* of *Christ*, and the *Presbyters* set over it. 2. In the Sentence now before us He makes these very *Presbyters* constituted not by the *Flock* it self, (i. e. the *Laity*;) but either by the *Apostles*, or by other choice Excellent Persons, such as *Timothy*, and *Titus*. 3. In the Sentence before that He affirms that the *Apostles* order'd that there should always be a particular *Order* of Men succeeding to the *Office* of those whom they ordained upon their Deaths. 4. In another place, p. 132. He beseecheth the *Laity* to be subject to the *Presbyters*, appointed by the Persons before spoken of, to be their *Pastors*, and *Teachers*. 5. In another place, p. 98. He distinguisheth the *Presbyters* and *Deacons* made at the very beginning of the preaching of the *Apostles*, from the believing *Laity*. 6. In another, p. 96. He distinguisheth, in the *Christian Church* manifestly, the *Station* and *Offices* of *High-Priest*, *Priest*, and *Levite*, from that of *Laics*, who He saith

Chap. III. are within Bounds; and so goes on to exhort the *Corinthian Laics* to keep within the Bounds prescribed to them. Now who would think that these and the like *Passages*, and *Expressions* in this *Apostolical Author* should be wholly past over by this *Impartial Author*, and every little Word caught at, and rigorously interpreted, that it may bear hard upon a whole *Order* of Men, and expose them to those who have neither ability, nor leisure to search into the Primitive Constitution of *Ecclesiastical Affairs*?

After I have taken so much pains to consider particularly every thing He hath alleged from the *Writings* of the *Apostles*, and their *Contemporaries*, I shall not think myself oblig'd to consider at large all St. *Cyprian's* high *Complements* to the *Laity*. For, This *Author* himself knows that the *Laity* neither did then, nor do now, deserve such *Epithets*, and *Encomiums* as He gives them without making great *Abatements* in the *Interpretation* of them. 2. He produceth nothing out of Him concerning *Ordination*, but that He was resolv'd not to act in it clandestinely, but in the face of the *People*, that they might have the more *Satisfaction*: nothing to take from himself the *Authority* of *Ordaining*, or to give it to them. 3. Supposing they chose him *Bishop*, and in some other *Churches* chose their *Bishops*, this will not

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prove that they ordained one single *Presbyter*, or that every particular *Congregation* appointed their own *Pastor* and *Teacher*,—any more than the *Peoples* chusing a *King* proves that, after that Choice, they *commission* all *Justices of Peace*, and *Officers* who are to act under *Him*. 4. This *Author* himself will not be determined by *St. Cyprian* concerning the *Authority* of a *Bishop*, or any other *Ecclesiastical* Matters, but just make use of some particular Sentences in him as He judges may best serve his own purpose.

From all that hath been said under this *Head* it appears, that none of the *Instances* alleged by this *Author* of the *Laity's Preaching*, and *Baptizing* are of any force in the *Cause* He hath undertaken; and likewise, which happens very unluckily, that every one of those *Books*, and *Writings*, out of which He hath chosen these *Instances*, bear abundant Evidence of a settled distinction between *Clergy*, and *Laity*, in the very first, and earliest days of the *Church*, and in all *Churches* as soon as it was possible. And from all that hath been said in answer to the *Argument* drawn by this *Author* from the *Powers*, and *Practice* of the *Laity* in the days of the *Apostles*, it is manifest that *all Church Power was not in the People*; and particularly, that they were restrained by the *Apostles* themselves from *Ordination*, and the *Ma-*

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Chap. III. nagement of that lodged, and left by them in the hands of *Ecclesiastical Officers* distinct from the *Laity*. In fine, I am as much against *Ecclesiastical Tyranny* as this *Author* himself can be. I plead not for any *Exorbitant Powers* in *Bishops*, nor any *Authority* in any of the *Clergy*, but what is necessary at all times for the carrying forward the great ends of the *Gospel*, and the better securing the profession of *Christianity* in the *World*. I have past over all his *Witticisms*, and his unseasonable *Jests*, and confined myself wholly to his *Reasonings* on the point of *Ordination*; to which it hath been my only Business to give a clear and sufficient Reply: which I now recommend to his serious Consideration, hoping that it may help to convince Him that this part of his *Cause* is not so evident as He would willingly believe it to be.

Conclusion.

And now to conclude the whole. Having shewn in the *First Chapter* from all the *Scripture Instances*, and *Rules*, relating to *Ordination*, that this *Affair* was managed, in the days of the *Apostles*, by *Officers* superior to *Presbyters*, and this by the appointment of the *Apostles* themselves: Having vindicated the validity of that *Concurrent Testimony* of

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Episcopal Ordination.

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Antiquity which bears witness to the *Apostles* Chap. III. fixing this *Superiority* in the *Church*, and traces it up to their Days: Having shewn the *Insufficiency*, and *Inconsistency* of those *Schemes*, concerning the fixing *Episcopacy* in the *Church*, which have been opposed to this: Nay, having shewn that even *St. Jerome* himself, to whom the great Patrons of the *Presbyterian Cause* appeal, (if He had any determinate Judgment concerning it;) was of opinion that it was established in the days of the *Apostles*, and that the *Right of Ordination* was annexed to it: Having shewn in the *Second Chapter* that no *Instance*, or *Rule* alleged either from the *New Testament*, or *Ecclesiastical Antiquity*, in favour of *Presbyterian Ordination*, is sufficient to establish the *Right of Presbyters* to that *Office*: And having shewn the like in the *Third Chapter*, concerning what is alleged in favour of the *Laity's* right to the same *Office*; I think I may very safely conclude, that a settled distinction between the *Clergy*, and *Laity*; and, amongst those of the former *Order*, between the *Offices* of *Bishops* (peculiarly so called) and *Presbyters* is founded upon the *Will* of the *Apostles*: particularly that the *Right of Ordination*, by their *Will*, belongs to *Bishops*; and was never designed by them to be entrusted to *Presbyters*; or allow'd to be exercised by the *Christian Laity*.

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What Consequences follow from what hath been said, I leave to all to determine for themselves: only I think it necessary to add, on the one hand, that for my own part I cannot argue that *Episcopacy* is *Essential* to a *Christian Church* because it is of *Apostolical Institution*: And on the other hand, I do argue that we are oblig'd, to the utmost of our Knowledge, to conform our selves to the *Apostolical Model* in all Cases, unless in such where the *Imitation* is *unpracticable*, or would manifestly do more hurt, than good, to the *Church of Christ*; neither of which can possibly be affirmed, in the ordinary State of the *Church*, concerning the *Point* now before us, as far as the *Essentials* of *Episcopacy* are concerned. Far be it from me to think otherwise till it can be shewn either that the *Apostles* did not institute *Episcopacy* with a design of its continuance in the *Church*; or that they instituted it, not as a matter of *Order*, but of such necessity as others contend for. In fine, I have heartily endeavour'd, in the foregoing *Treatise*, to convince some mistaken Persons of their *Errors*: but having done this, I dare not presume to judge them by my *Notions*; but must leave them entirely to *God*, and their own *Consciences*.

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APPENDIX.

A Ltho' I have in the foregoing Pages said what is sufficient to justify all that I advanced concerning *Episcopal Ordination* in the *First Part* of the *Reasonableness of Conformity*, notwithstanding the *Objections*, and *Questions* proposed against it by Mr. Calamy in the *First Part* of his *Defense*; yet lest I should be thought by some Persons designedly to pass by any thing material in this *Controversy*, I shall here very briefly,

First, Consider the *Objections* raised by Him against my way of arguing on this Head: And,

Secondly, Answer the *Questions* He hath seen fit to propose to me upon it.

As to the *first* of these, I argued that *Episcopal Ordination* was the *Settled, Regular Ordination* in the *Church*; and therefore that it may

A Reply to Objections

may justly be expected that all who minister in the *Church* should be ordained by *Bishops*; and that none who refuse this *settled Method*, and without a necessity depart from it, and take another, (which by consequence must be *irregular*, because it is not the *settled Method*) ought to be acknowledged as approv'd of God in this *Irregular Separation* of themselves to the *Ministry*. Now this is just reasoning, supposing *Episcopacy* to have been founded only on the *Compact* of *Presbyters*; and the *Confinement* of *Ordination* to *Bishops*, merely a lawful *Confinement*, which *Blondel* and our *Adversaries* have often acknowledg'd it to be. For from hence it will follow that it is the only *Regular Ordination* settled in the *Church* by such *Compact*, and that, as it is a matter of as much *Consequence* as any point of *Order* can be, God cannot approve of any *Unnecessary Departure* from it: which is not to lay a stress upon it as a matter of *Indispensable Necessity*, but of *Decency*, and *Regularity*. And certainly there needs no *Argument* to prove, that even supposing any other *Method* lawful, and agreeable to *Scripture*, yet if another equally lawful be *settled* in the *Church*, it must be a breach of *Order*, and *Regularity* to depart from it, and not to be justified but by necessity. This is the *Summ* of what I have formerly advanced: And this is both just in itself, and, as I likewise said, agreeable to

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the Principles, and reasoning of Mr. Baxter. Both which things are denied by the Author now before me.

1. He allegeth, p. 54. that *Episcopal Ordination* may be the *Regular Ordination*, and yet not the *only Regular Ordination*: And that *Ordination* by *Presbyters* may likewise be *Regular*, as it is justify'd by the *Scripture* itself, p. 57. I answer, 1. I have shewn before that there is no Instance in the *New Testament* of *Ordination* by *Presbyters*, nor any thing to prove that this *Right* was ever entrusted to Them: So that *Ordinations* by them are not *Regular* even in his own sense. 2. Supposing *Ordination* left at large to them in *Scripture*, and afterwards confin'd by themselves to a superior *Officer* (which this *Author* acknowledges both lawful, and actually to have been done) from the time of this *Confinement*, and the general *Establishment* of it, no other *Method* can be *Regular*, nor justify'd by any thing but *Necessity*: as after the Choice of a *King*, no *Commission* can regularly come from any but that *King*. 3. When out of two *Methods*, supposed to be lawful, one is chosen, and established, both by *Consent*, and *Custom* of many *Ages*; the other set up again in the same place where the former is used, and in opposition to it, cannot be called *Regular* in any tolerable sense, in which that *Word* was ever used, tho' it should be granted

ed to have been equally good, and proper before such Settlement,

2. He goes on in the same place to argue that supposing *Ordination* by *Presbyters* irregular, this is no reason for their submitting to *Episcopal Ordination* who have been ordained by *Presbyters*, because this is the acknowledging their former *Ordination* to be null, and void: which doth not follow from its being *Irregular*. I answer, it doth not follow indeed that it is null, and void in such sense, as that *Presbyters* had not originally a *Right to Ordain* but it follows that it is so far null, and void that God did not approve of the *Exercise* of that *Right* in opposition to a lawful settled *Method*, which is a sufficient ground of submitting to that *Established Method*. As, in a parallel Case, whatever *Original Right* there may be in a *People* to constitute lesser sort of *Officers*, or in those *Officers* to constitute others of the same sort, after the Choice of a *King* all *Exercise* of this *Right*, unless in Cases of the highest *Necessity*, is in such sense *Null*, and *Void*, that none can expect to be acknowledged duly authorized to the *Offices* they pretend to before they have taken their *Commissions* from the *King* himself.

3. He represents my Argument thus, To grant our Orders to be Regular, which we deny yours; therefore it is safest to fall in with us and so explodes it, in Arch-Bishop Tillotson's Words

Words, as parallel with that foolish Argument of the *Papists*, You acknowledge that we may be saved, which we deny concerning you; therefore it is your safest way to come over to us, p. 56. an Argument; according to his usual manner, of his own inventing; for I have nothing like it. My Reasoning was never designed, as I know of, to touch the Salvation of any Man: nor can it be in the least degree, uncharitable to say that Almighty God cannot approve the unnecessary neglect of Order, and Regularity, which is all I have said. The Argument of the *Romanists* is, You acknowledge a Possibility of Salvation in our Church, i. e. that Invincible Ignorance joined with true Sincerity may be an Apology for the Errors of many in it: which we do not acknowledge concerning yours. But who doth not see that this is no Argument, why those who know the Errors and Superstitions of that Church should go over to it? Because there is no Acknowledgment, in this, of the Possibility of Salvation to such Persons as these. My Argument is this, You acknowledge Episcopal Ordination lawful, and your own Compliance with this, considered by itself, to be not only safe, and secure, but to be chosen before any other, as being the Settled Method. Therefore, you ought to submit to it, unless Necessity forbid: And therefore, to deviate from this, without such Necessity, cannot be accept-

acceptable to Almighty God. Let any one judge what Affinity there is between these two Arguments, and with what Equity the Parallel is here drawn by this Author.

4. After all this, He hath four Reasons against admitting my way of arguing, p. 57. As, 1. *Because it is so like the reasoning of the Papists against the Protestants.* Now, 1. This Author must know that such a Reason as this is, in truth, no Reason at all, because it will be hard to say that every thing like any reasoning of Papists is false. 2. Suppose the Papists say to us, Your Ordainers wanted Authority, doth it follow from hence that this can justly be said to no Persons, because they apply it wrong? May it not be said that Laymen have no Authority to Ordain? And would not this Author himself say it to some Protestants, notwithstanding that it is like the Reasoning of the Papists? 3. Just such an Argument as this I find brought against the Lawfulness of Resistance to the Civil Powers in some Cases, viz. that the Papists hold the same: and doth it follow from thence that it may not be maintained by a Protestant? 4. That Regularity is not to be neglected without a great necessity, is my Principle: and this Author hath said the same himself over and over again. 2. My Reasoning reflects upon many suffering Witnesses of Christ, and on most of the Reformed Churches abroad. I answer, 1. As much

much as any other difference of Opinion doth: and I hope this *Author* will not oblige, even himself, to be of the same Judgment in all things with all the *suffering Witnesses of Christ*. 2. He himself, before He is aware, furnisheth me with a sufficient *Reply* to this, in what He saith on the like occasion, *Part II. p. 262. I cant tell how to think it a part of the Honour due to Martyrs to think them infallible.* And yet it seems it must be a Crime in me not to think them so. Nor doth his own neglect of *Episcopacy* reflect less upon other *suffering Witnesses of Christ*. 3. The thinking *Reformed Churches* in an Error is no Crime: and I doubt not He himself doth so, in many Instances. Nor was the preserving, or defending *Episcopacy* in this *Nation* ever accounted by themselves any Reflexion, or Dishonour upon them: If it were, their not retaining it is as great a Reflexion upon us. Besides, many Eminent Members of them have applauded the retaining it amongst us, and condemned those who have here refused to submit to it, always accounting the *Cases* very different, of themselves, and those who have here separated from the *Episcopal Church*. But if my *Reasoning* reflects only upon most of the *Reformed Churches*, then the *Reasoning* of this *Author* contrary to it, reflects upon others of them: and so we are both equally guilty of this heinous Crime; and both equally in an Error.

4. The

4. The Point is, whether the *Reasoning* be in itself just, or unjust : not whether it reflects on any Persons, or not. 3. *My Reasoning* lays greater stress upon a Nicety, than upon the main Substance; and therefore is false. Now, in one word, this is down-right false Accusation without any ground : for I have laid no stress upon *Episcopal Ordination* but as upon a matter of Order, and Regularity : and as such He himself must own it ought not to be neglected without a *Necessity* ; which is all I have said. Under this same Head he acknowledges that *the most Eminent Abilities* won't presently render a Man an Authorized Minister. Doth he, therefore, lay greater stress upon the Hands of any *Ecclesiastical Ministers*, than upon the *most Eminent Abilities* ? If he will not be contented to have this fixed upon *Himself*, with what Justice can he tax me with this, upon no greater Grounds than, this ? But I find him ready, at all Adventures, to raise a Cry against me, even tho' he *Himself* must necessarily be involved in the same guilt. 4. *My Reasoning* is such, as would not be born, if retorted : and therefore to be used with Caution. Now, 1. Supposing this true, it is not sufficient to prove my Reasoning false, or unjust. But, 2. I promise him to bear it, when the same is retorted : tho' I suppose he will not expect that I should admit what is not truly the same. So that here are four Reasons given against

my way of arguing, all of which, in the first place, are not true; and in the next place, granting them true, *three* of them are of no force at all. For an *Argument* may be just, and yet bear some resemblance to that the *Romanists* say on some occasions. An *Argument* may be just, tho' it imply in it that all *Martyrs*, or all the *Reformed Churches*, are not infallible. An *Argument* may be just, and yet Men may be so partial to themselves, as not well to bear it when it is retorted.

Having shewn the *Justness* of my way of arguing, notwithstanding his *Objections*, I must now add a Word or two concerning its agreement with Mr. *Baxter's* Principles, and manner of arguing in his *Disputation* with Mr. *Johnson*, to be found in the *Abridgment* of his *Life* by the *Author* now before me, p. 129. Concerning this there are *two* things which I have said, 1. That upon Mr. *Baxter's* Principles, and his way of arguing in that *Disputation*, my *Reasoning* must be allow'd of: for the truth of which I appeal to what I have written in the first part of the *Reasonableness* of *Conformity* on this Head, and against which I find no *Objection* in this *Author*. 2. That it was Mr. *Baxter's* Opinion (as is plain from the occasion of the *Disputation* now mention'd) that nothing but *Necessity* can excuse those who neglect *Episcopal Ordination*. This is denied, and I am tax'd with Misrepresentation upon this *Head*, by the

Author I am now considering, p. 199. Now I can here only appeal to the *Abridgment* of Mr. Baxter's Life composed by this very *Author*. And if I should be mistaken in this, I hope *He*, of all Men, will pardon me, if it appear that he himself led me into the Mistake. I say then, that the *Account* of that *Disputation* given by this *Author* himself justifieth every word I here say. The *Account* is this in his own Words, *Abridg.* p. 125. Mr. Johnson wrote to Mr. Baxter about the necessity of Episcopal Ordination. He in answer to him maintained, that there was no absolute necessity; that a Man might be a true Minister who was ordained by Presbyters; and that, in Cases of necessity, it was a duty to take Ordination from them. All which is agreeable to what I have said, and implieth as strongly as Words can imply any thing, that it was his Opinion that *Episcopal Ordination* is the Regular Ordination, to be sought after, unless in Cases of Necessity. If this be a Misrepresentation, I must leave this *Author* to answer for it, for it is owing to himself. Nay, I will add, I think it agreeable even to the Principles of this *Author* himself, as well as all the best of the *Disputing Writers*; who allow the Confinement of Ordination to Bishops lawful, and sometime useful; and themselves, whenever they speak of their Neglect of Episcopal Ordination, speak of their being forced to it, and always draw their chief Apology from the Necessity they

found themselves under to have recourse to other Methods. And is it not very hard that I should be thus used by this *Licentious Pen*, for saying only what all their own Reasonings allow, that *Necessity* only can justify their Separation, and Neglect of the *Established Method of Ordination*? But I have learned by Experience to expect nothing from this *Author* of that Candor, and Equity with which I once hoped this *Controversy* might be managed. Thus much for the Justification of my Reasoning on the point of *Episcopal Ordination* in a former *Treatise*.

Secondly, I come now to the Questions he hath thought fit to propose to me on this Head, p. 229. concerning which, the fairest Proposal I can make is, that the *Reader* should turn to them, as he himself hath expressed them, that I may not be said to alter any thing in my Representation of them.

To the *First*, I answer, *Yes*: but cannot think now I am at all concerned in it.

To the *Second*, I answer, that the same way of Reasoning will justify all those who take the Public Administration of God's Word, and Sacraments upon them without any Ministerial Investiture; without Ordination by any Ecclesiastical Officers at all. Now such as these I need not be afraid to say, that *Christ* cannot approve in this their Neglect, because this *Author* himself goes so far as to say, p. 199. that

He, and his Brethren, as backward as they are to encourage an Ecclesiastical Pound, have yet so little fondness for a Wild Common, that they should readily join in declaring their dislike of any Ordinations that can from Scripture be proved to be Irregular. Now amongst the Scripture-requisites he himself reckons the approbation, and hands of a *Presbyter*, or *Teacher*. Let this Question therefore be answered by himself, with respect to *Well-qualified Persons* who neglect all Ordination by any Ecclesiastical Minister, and the same Answer will serve me. But I add, that I never made any Ordination necessary to the *Validity* of *Christ's Ordinances*, tho' this Author himself hath, and speaks in this place, as if I had. On the contrary, I have shewn that *God's Blessing* will ever attend honest and sincere *Christians*, whether He that ministers amongst them be duly authorized to his Office, or not. In one word, Persons who neglect all Ordination by Ministers, may have very great Abilities; may be very well qualified; may preach *Christ out of good-will*; they are honest, tho' mistaken People, who follow them, may be blessed by *Almighty God*: What therefore will he say to them? Doth *Christ* approve them? How then can He disapprove them, or to what purpose doth he so often declare that none may be approved that have not the Scripture-requisites he mentions? But notwithstanding these Qualifications, he is ready

dy to express his dislike of such Persons, as he
saith himself, then I may be allow'd to do the
like, notwithstanding any thing in this *Que-*
stion which concerns only the *Qualifications,*
and *Abilities* of the *Persons* who take upon
them the *Office* of *Public Teachers* in the *Church*.
St. Paul rejoiced, this *Author* often urgeth,
that *Christ* was preached, tho' it was out of
Envy: that is, he rejoiced that many sincere
Persons, who had not opportunity of hearing
the *Gospel* otherwise, were so far blessed by
God, as to be brought, by the preaching of
Men, of no very good Principles, to the
Knowledge of *Jesus Christ*. But notwith-
standing their bad Temper in one respect, the
Persons who preached might be *Authorized* to
that *Office*. And if so, this saying of St. Paul's
doth not patronize any Irregularity. If they
were not *Authorized*, this Instance proves that
the Benefit received by the *People* is no Argu-
ment for approving the *Ministers* by whose
means that Benefit comes, or any reason for
thinking them *Authorized* by God, for the
Office of *Public Ministers*. Accordingly I
heartily rejoyce that any Person is by any
means converted either to the *Faith*, or *Prac-*
tice of the *Gospel*: But I cannot think it just
to argue from hence that the *Person* by whose
means this Change was made, is therefore
duly *Authorized* to be a *Public Minister*.

To the *Third*, I answer, 1. That *David* did not go out against *Goliath* without first having his *Commission* from *Saul*; and therefore it is not a parallel Case. 2. Supposing he did, it was a Case of *Necessity*, and so justifiable. 3. Why is this *Author* himself ready to express his *Dislike* of those who set up for *Ministers* without the formality of a *Ministerial Investiture*? His Answer to this, will answer his own *Question*. 4. There are other ways of contributing to the throwing down of the Kingdom, and Power of *Satan* besides *Public Preaching*, and administering the *Sacraments*.

To the *Fourth* I answer, as this *Author* often doth on other occasions, Let *Reason*, not *Authority* be Judge. It is of small Importance to consider *who* saith, but *what* is said. Many things have been injudiciously urged against the *Papists*: Nor must every thing be reputed just, because it hath been alleged against *Them*. The *Reasons* for what I have said, I have given at large in the foregoing *Treatise*, as well as in other of my Writings: and in the same have answer'd much more important Difficulties than what are proposed under this *Question*. I should be glad of the help of any Good, and Judicious Persons in carrying forward the great Ends of the *Gospel*; but see not that it is therefore necessary to approve of any Persons setting up distinct *Assemblies* and distinct methods of *Worship*, in opposi-

tion to an *Establishment*: from whence so many fatal *Effects* have been seen to follow.

To the *Fifth*, I answer, Many of the best and most *Learned* of the *French Protestant Refugees* have thought it very fit to submit to *Episcopal Ordination*: But if any have made this a Condition of their partaking of our *Charity*, I disapprove it as much as this *Author*, tho' I do not believe it upon his Intimation. How I am concerned in this I can't tell.

To the *Sixth*, I answer, that I am always against being hardest upon those who come nearest to us: Nor is it any sign of being hard upon them, that I have on one hand, endeavour'd to persuade themselves to come quite over to us by no other Method *but* that of Reasoning; or on the other hand, pleaded their *Cause* publicly against the Violence of others. But still I cannot but think it more unaccountable that Persons should separate from an *Ecclesiastical Government*, and *Worship*, which they acknowledge to be *materially Lawful*, than that *others* should separate from what they account *Unlawful*, and *Unchristian*. But I think it may justly be complained of, that this *Author* himself hath chosen to represent those *Church-men* who have gone to the greatest Extremities against the *Dissenters*, as the *True*, and *Honest Church-men*; and to be so hard upon *others* who have labour'd to bring our *Differences* to an *Accommodation*, as

to drop frequent Insinuations even against their *Honesty*, and *Sincerity* in Conformity to the Church of England.

To the *Seventh*, I answer, that the same may be said with respect to such *Teachers* as have neglected all *Ministerial Ordination*: whom yet, notwithstanding their Seriousness, or the *Call* of any People, this *Author* is ready to declare his dislike of; as they have neglected what he saith the *Scripture* requires of them, before they can be esteemed Authorized *Ministers*. So likewise I may, notwithstanding any force in this *Question*, be obliged not to think a Person an *Authorized Minister*, tho' never so serious, and never so much invited by *People* to come amongst them: because, according to himself, something more than this is requisite to the making him such.

To the *Eighth*, I answer, 1. I have no concern in it, having never laid near so much stress upon an *Irregularity*, as upon the *Vices* here mentioned; and being always ready to acknowledge such *Faults* of the most pernicious consequence to *Religion*. 2. The greater *Faults* of *some* are no Excuses for the Neglects of *others*. 3. This *Author* will acknowledge that the *Vices* here mentioned are of more dangerous Consequence than the Neglect of all *Ministerial Ordination*: and yet He condemns that *Neglect*; and according to his own Principles, cannot approve those as *Authorized Ministers*,

nifters, who are guilty of it ; from whence He may judge that such a *Question* is of small Importance, as to the business of *Authorized Ministers*, it being certain, in his Opinion, that something more is necessary to their *Authority*, than the best *Qualifications* imaginable, and it being evident that this *Question* equally defends the *Authority* of all *Understanding*, and *sober Persons*, who set themselves up for *Ministers*.

To the *Ninth*, I answer, The same *Benefit* may come from any *Deist*, or *Ignorant Mechanic's* setting up a Meeting in a *Parish* merely out of worldly Interest : and yet this *Author* will not justify the *Authority* of such *Administrators of God's Word and Sacraments*.

To the *Tenth*, I answer, 1. That I put no *Man's Acquittance*, or *Condemnation* at the Great Day, upon any thing but his *Sincerity*, or *Insincerity* throughout his Behaviour in this World. 2. Many a Man will then be condemned for his Personal Vices, who hath been an *Authorized Minister* in this World : and many an one may be justified who hath thought himself one, tho' He hath not truly been one. 3. Person may be condemned at the last Day, tho' He hath been an Instrument of converting many by his *Ministerial Labours*. 4. This *Question* equally justifies those who neglect all *Ministerial Investiture* ; whom yet this *Author* cannot justify any more than I can those who neglect

neglect *Episcopal Ordination*: and consequently is of no force. 5. Tho' God hath declared that *Moral Duties* are to be preferr'd before *Positive Institutions*, or matters of *Order*, and *Decency*; yet He expects that *both* should be regarded, when they can, and it is only *Necessity* that can justify the Neglect of the *latter*. 6. It being the *Success* only, or the *Benefit* reap'd by others, which is the Argument here why God will own some Persons for his *Authorized Ministers*, and this being often spoken of by this *Author*, I must add some Remarks upon this Head. Now, 1. This *Success*, He cannot deny, may be granted purely on account of the *Honesty* of the *People*: and therefore is not necessarily an Argument of any thing else but those good Dispositions in them, which God thinks fit to bless. 2. It may be granted in the *Case* of the greatest *Hypocrites*, who have no sense of *Religion*, but only minister for worldly Ends, and without being call'd to it by any in *Authority*: and therefore cannot be an Argument of their being *Authorized Ministers*. 3. It was granted to those who preached *Christ* out of *Envy* in *St. Paul's* time but was no Argument to him of the *Divine commission* of those *Preachers*. 4. Our Debate about the force of this *Argument* was occasioned chiefly by the *Case* of those who have no other Argument but that from *Success* to urge in their own behalf, having neglected

all *Ministerial Ordination*. Such as these, this *Author* in one place saith He dares not *censure*, because of this *Success*: yet in another, He is ready to declare his Dislike of such as have neglected any of the *Scripture-requisites* amongst which himself reckons *Ministerial Ordination*. This is a strange way of proceeding; especially when He saith, *p. 220.* that He himself is not for taking *Success* alone, but in conjunction with other things. Upon which I desire to know why this should hinder him from censuring those, who have nothing else to urge for themselves; or why He should give himself such Liberties on this Head against one who hath only deny'd it to be an Argument, of itself, sufficient to prove the *Divine Commission* of any one to *minister* publicly in the *Church*: when He himself reckons up several other things requisite, before and besides this *Success*, to prove any one an *Authorized Minister*, according to the *Scriptures* themselves. In answer to what he urgeth, *p. 219.* I desire it may be consider'd, that when any *Prophets* came to the *Jews* promising and foretelling happy Events, and worldly good things to come, and were not sent of *God* to do this, it is certain that all their Promises and *Prophecies* could not profit the *People*, for this very Reason, because they were not commissioned by *God* to *prophecy* good things to them: and likewise because the *People* might have seen

seen by several Tokens, had they sincerely done their Duty, that they were not *sent of God* on such an *Errand*, contrary to the Message brought to them by other undoubted *Prophets*. But how doth it follow from hence that *sincere Christians*, who heartily endeavour to know the Truth, but yet are mistaken concerning the *Divine Commission* of some particular Persons, may not profit in Virtue, and Goodness by the Moral Instructions, and Arguments proposed to them by such Persons. And as for St. Paul's calling the *Corinthian Christians* the *Seal* of his *Apostleship*, this Author himself will acknowledge that *Success* alone no more proved St. Paul's *Divine Commission*, than it did the *Divine Commission* of those who preached *Christ* out of *Envy* and *Ill-will*, for the good Effects brought out of which evil design of theirs St. Paul rejoices: and consequently there is nothing in this against me. Nay, it is manifest that a *Seal* alone by itself is no proof of any *Commission*: and that the *Commission* must go before the *Seal*, and be proved by other *Arguments*, and other *Circumstances*. Besides, it was very fit that St. Paul should mention the good Effects of his *Preaching* amongst them, that they might not be drawn away from Him by any Pretences of others to the same purpose: and this is an Argument why They of all *Christians* should acknowledge his *Apostleship*, because he had as great

great Success amongst them, as any one else could pretend to. But it cannot follow from hence that He appeal'd to his *Success* amongst them as, absolutely speaking, an Argument of his being sent by God. For He was completely an *Apostle* sent of God before this; and would have been so had he not converted one single Person at *Corinth* to the *Christian Religion*. When he sets himself to prove his *Divine Commission*, he appeals to other Arguments; viz. the wonderful manner of his being called to the *Ministry*, and the Miracles which he wrought in proof of it. These are the *Topics* He insists upon: and by these He could prove himself an *Apostle* to those amongst whom He had never preached at all. These and many other things being consider'd, it will appear evident that *Success*, consider'd by itself, is no Argument of the *Divine Commission* of any *Minister*, or *Preacher*.

To the *Eleventh* Question this *Author* himself answers in other places, that let a Person have never so excellent *Qualifications*, he must make others the Judges of them, and cannot be justified in his neglect of *Ministerial Ordination*: yet doth this *Question* equally justify all Neglects of that Nature.

To the *Twelfth*, I answer, 1. that amongst all the *Primitive Irregularities* we read not of any Persons taking the work of *Ordination* to themselves out of the hands of *Bishops*. And

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2. Supposing any had done this; as this *Author* and his *Brethren* would not now submit to *Episcopal Ordination* merely because others had done so in the *Primitive Church* after *Presbyterian Ordination*; so I cannot think it a good Argument against insisting upon *Episcopal Ordination*, that some of the *Antients* did not do it. 3. This *Author* himself is ever representing the *Antients* as speaking too hotly, and too highly in favour of *Episcopal Ordination*.

To the *Thirteenth*, I answer, that I think not an *uninterrupted Line of Succession* of regularly Ordained *Bishops* necessary: And likewise, on the other hand, that the *Personal Vices* of any *Bishops* are no Argument against their being the proper *Ministers* of Ordination. If they were, there could be no Security in this point, because all may possibly be either secretly, or openly vicious. And the same may be said supposing the *Right* of *Presbyters* themselves to Ordain.

To the *Fourteenth*, I answer, that my Reasoning on this Head hath been rejected by this *Author*, because it bears some resemblance to that of the *Romanists*; and yet now an Argument is drawn against it, because it is not agreeable to their Proceedings. How can he argue from the Practice of the *Church of Rome*, when it is so often accounted by *Him* a Prejudice against any matter, that it is like to something amongst them? But indeed the Cases here

here mentioned are not parallel to the *Case* before us : and if they were, the true Rule is to consider what is reasonable to be done, not what the *Church of Rome* doth in any *Case*.

To the *Fifteenth*, the like Answer will serve.

To the *Sixteenth*, 1. I answer the same, (and so saith this *Author* often) that we are to proceed by *Reason*, and not by *Example*,

2. *Presbyterians* cannot possibly call in question the *Orders* of those who received them from a *Bishop*; (in whom they acknowledge a Right to Ordain as He is a *Presbyter* only by *Divine Appointment*;) but it doth not follow from hence that *Ordinations* by *Presbyters* must be acknowledged *Valid* by those who think that they never were entrusted with that *Affair*, and have no right to claim the *Management* of it.

To the *Last*, I answer, that all Men certainly ought to receive *Truth*; but that the preaching of *Truth* is not sufficient to prove any one *authorized* to be a *Public Minister*. This is so far from being pleaded by all *Parties*, that I know of none who say it; and this *Author* himself expressly contradicts it, and declares it not to be sufficient to prove any Person an *authorized Minister*, by reckoning up many other *Scripture-requisites*, and by his readiness to disown the *Divine Commission* of all who have them not. What can be the meaning therefore of his desiring the benefit of such

an *Argument* as this, which equally defends the *Public Ministry* of those who neglect all *Ordination*, whom yet in other places, He hath declared He would not be thought to justify?

Thus having consider'd the *Queries*, proposed by Him, *with all the Seriousness the Subject requires*; and having returned Answers to every one of them, I appeal to every impartial *Reader* whether there be any thing contained in them sufficient to justify the Neglect of *Episcopal Ordination*, but what is sufficient likewise to justify the Neglect of all *Ordination*; and consequently whether they signify any thing to the purpose for which they are intended by this *Author*.

F I N I S.

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A
REPLY
TO THE
INTRODUCTION
TO THE
SECOND PART
OF
Mr. Calamy's DEFENSE
OF
Moderate Nonconformity.

REFLECT

TO THE

INTERSECTION

TO THE

SECOND PART

OF

THE COLONY'S DEFENSE

OF

MODERATE NON-RESISTANCE

A
 R E P L Y
 TO THE
 INTRODUCTION
 TO THE
 SECOND PART
 OF
 Mr. *Calamy's* Defense
 of *Moderate Nonconformity.*

Perceive Mr. *Calamy* would very willingly have his *Readers* believe, that the *Introduction* to the *Second Part* of his *Defense of Moderate Nonconformity* contains it the very *Heart* of the *Controversy* between us. And I, for my part, am so ready to put the *whole* of our *Dispute* upon any Point *He* can name, that I lay hold of this Opportunity of examining, whether it contain any thing in it, sufficient to justify
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what He calls *Moderate Nonconformity*; which is the Point, He often tells us, He proposes to himself. But because there is so very small a part of that *Introduction*, which so much as attempts to demonstrate the *Unlawfulness* of *Compliance* with the *Impositions* in the *Church of England*; and so great a part of it employ'd upon *Topics* very distant from this; I think myself oblig'd to go through the whole of it, as far as I, or the *Cause* I have undertaken, can be supposed to be concerned in it: lest any who read it should be so misled, as to think there is more *Truth*, and *Reason* in it, than I can find; or be diverted by the many *Personal*, and *Foreign* Matters in it, from the main, and only material *Question* between us. And for this end in order to proceed as distinctly as possible in this *Enquiry*.

I. I shall consider all the *Objections* there alleged against what I have formerly advanced upon the *Head* of *Ecclesiastical Impositions*.

II. I shall make some *Reflexions* upon the *Scheme* of *Liberty*, there proposed by Mr. Calamy.

III. I shall endeavour to shew, that there is nothing, there advanced, sufficient to prove

prove a *Compliance* with our *Impositions* unlawful; and therefore, nothing against the lawfulness of *Constant Communion* with the *Church of England*; and consequently, nothing sufficient to justify *Moderate Nonconformity*.

I. I am obliged to consider all the *Objections* there alleged against what I have formerly advanced upon the *Head of Ecclesiastical Impositions*.

The *Impositions* concerning which our Debate hath been, are *Three*, viz. *Kneeling* at the *Communion*; the use of *Sponsors* in the *Baptism* of *Infants*; and the use of the *Cross* after *Baptism*. What I have said concerning these may be seen in the *First Part* of the *Reasonableness of Conformity*, p. 66. &c. But because my Sense in this part of the *Controversy* hath not been represented as I could wish, and as I might justly have expected, I think it but reasonable to endeavour once more to set it in a fair light, especially now I am going to defend it from the *Objections* made against it.

1. Therefore, I laid down, as what was my own Opinion, that the *Bishops* have Authority to prescribe for the better and more decent Administration of the Offices of Religion; for the Beauty and Advantage of that *Christian Society* in which they preside.

This is a matter fit, and worthy to be look'd after by *Governours*; and if done after an unexceptionable manner, all will, I believe, acknowledge it for the good of the *Church of Christ* in general, and for the honour of the Worship of God, and the Offices of Religion. And this Power I lodged in the hands of the *Bishops*, because in the *first Ages* of the *Gospel*, no Power in any Affairs relating to the Church could be in any hands but those of *Ecclesiastical Officers*, all *Civil Magistrates* being professed Enemies to the *Christian Name*: and because they are at present, by the *Providence of God*, the *Ecclesiastical Governours* of this part of the *Christian Church*: And however it came so to be, whether from the original appointment of the *Apostles*, or from the compact of *Presbyters*, or from the decrees of the *Civil Powers*; our *Adversaries* acknowledge it a *lawful Constitution*, and the Care of these Churches intrusted to them. But this I do not go on to urge, but proceed, as may be seen in Page 67.

2. To argue with the *Dissenting Ministers* not absolutely from this *Authority*, but from their own *Professions*, and *Principles*. And here I endeavour to shew that the same *Objections* lie against their *Compliance* with the *Prescription of Time*, or *Place*, or *Liturgy* for *Public Worship*, with which they have professed

essed themselves ready to comply; and therefore that they may lawfully conform to the *scrupled Impositions*, and as well acknowledge an *Authority* in the Prescription of *them* (as far as *Compliance* contains in it such an Acknowledgement) as of *these*. And this I there urge at full length. This is the Summ of what I say in behalf of the *First Prescribers* of these *Impositions*; to which I might have added that considering this *Church* as reformed from *Popery*, there were wise and good Reasons for the prescribing these as well as some other things which might at the same time recommend it to the Affections of those about it, and also be decent *Ceremonies* in its own Services: and these Reasons, I believe, were such as would have moved some of the Wisest and Best of our Modern *Dissenters* to have joined in the *Prescription*, had they lived at that time, and been consulted upon that occasion. Whether this *Reason* be now ceased, or whether there be not stronger Reasons now for leaving the *scrupled Impositions* indifferent, I do not at this time debate, But this is sufficient to shew, that the *First Prescribers* used the Power they had for the Good and Edification of the *Church*, and agreeably to the Will of God.

A Reply to Mr. Calamy.

3. As to those who have, notwithstanding the Scruples of so many *Protestants*, retained, and insisted rigorously upon the scrupled *Prescriptions*, I have said something in their Name, and with respect only to the way of arguing the *Dissenting Writers* have used in their Zeal against these *Impositions*. And,

4. To declare my own Thoughts freely, I added at the end of all this, that I should ever be ready in my place and station, to promote any such Alterations in things indifferent in themselves, as might reconcile sober Dissenters to the *Church*, and procure us a greater and stricter Union amongst ourselves. And this I think very consistently with what I had before declared concerning the *Authority of Bishops*. For as it belongs to the Office of the *Supreme Civil Powers* to order what seems to them conducive to the good of the *Civil Society*; and yet notwithstanding this, it may be a very honourable part of their Duty, when they find in the execution of their *Laws* a greater Damage than Advantage to the Common-wealth, to abolish, and repeal them: so likewise it may belong to the Office of Ecclesiastical Government, to make *Prescriptions* for the more decent Celebration of the Public Worship, &c. and yet notwithstanding this it may be their Duty, to alter, or abolish these *Prescriptions*, when Experience hath taught them, (contra-

ry to their own Expectations, or the design of those who first ordained them,) that the Disadvantages arising from them to the Church of Christ are, in the whole, greater than the Advantages of them. But this I never can be induced to urge so as to forget the Duty of *Inferiors*. For the Considerations of Public Good, and Peace, and Charity, are to guide and influence the whole World of *Christians*: and my *Scheme*, in this matter, is very short, and easy to be understood; *viz.* that both *Governors*, and *Governed* in the Church ought to have the same common end in their eye: that the former ought not always to insist upon their mere *Authority* even against unreasonable Opposers, but to wave *that* whenever by so doing they can promote the public Interest; and that the *latter* ought not to insist merely upon their *Christian Liberty*, even against unreasonable *Governors*, but gladly to wave *that* in indifferent matters of small Importance whenever by so doing they can consult the Peace of the *Christian Church*, and remove any occasions of Uncharitableness. These are my Sentiments concerning our *Impositions*: and I have laid them before the Reader once more, that He may take my Opinion from my own Words, and not from those of an *Adversary*, who hath always hitherto framed such *Schemes* for me

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concerning this Point, as I cannot own. And having thus represented my Thoughts to the Reader, I proceed to consider the *Objections* advanced against them in this *Introduction*.

Introd.
p. 37.

Obj. 1. 'Tis query'd, *How came the Bishops by this Authority?* I had before spoken plainly enough, had this *Author* been willing to understand me, that as they did, by the Providence of God, succeed in the Government of the Church, it belonged to their Province to take the most effectual Methods for the Advantage of the Church, and the Decency of the Offices of Religion. And any Prescriptions that do truly promote these, I doubt not, are agreeable to the Will of God, and not out of the Province of any who have it in their Power to ordain them. This Answer holds good, supposing the *Bishops* merely lawful *Governors* in possession of Power in the Church. But this did not serve this *Author's* Purposes: and therefore He makes another himself for me, after his usual method; and such an one as might give him a better opportunity of triumphing concerning the *Succession* of the *Bishops* to the Authority of the *Apostles*, which yet in as great degree even the most moderate of the *Dissenting Ministers*, have pretended to when ever they have had it in their power to constitute

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stitute and settle the *Church* according to their own Model. And surely it must be true that the present *Governors* of the *Church* succeed the *Apostles* in all that Power which is at present necessary to the well-being of it: and that it is ever agreeable to *God's Will*, whether declared in an express text of *Scripture* or not, that such things should be ordered and complied with as are truly for the interest of Religion, and the decent Celebration of the Offices of Religion. And I appeal to this *Author* himself, whether if He, and every other Christian in the Land were sensible that our *Prescriptions* were truly conducive to the Honour of God, and the better Performance of Religious Worship; whether, I say, upon this supposition, He would not acknowledge the *Prescription* of them, and *Compliance* with them agreeable to the Will of God.

Obj. 2. It is farther urged, that tho' the Supreme *Civil Magistrate* may have this Authority in *Civil Affairs*, yet the *Bishops* may not have it in Ecclesiastical Matters, because they are not Supreme, but *Christ* is the Head of the *Church*, and *Subordinate Officers* have no Authority but what He gives them. I answer, that the Highest *Civil Power* on Earth is subordinate to *God*, as well as the Ecclesiastical *Governors* to *Christ*: that as it is

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is always the Will of God that the *Civil Governors* should ordain what is truly for the Public Interest; so it is always agreeable to the Will of *Christ* that those who have the Power in his *Church* should use it for the promoting the great ends of Religion, and likewise of *Order*, and *Decency* in the Offices of it: that as this Authority in the *Civil Magistrate* doth not destroy, or take away the right of judging in the *People*, and of refusing Obedience whenever his Commands are apparently contrary to the Public Good; so neither doth this Authority in the *Bishops* rob the Christian People of their right to judge of the Nature of their *Prescriptions*, and to refuse Compliance whenever they are disagreeable to the Nature of true Religion, or the fundamental Laws of the *Christian Society*. I add this, because this *Author* seems in this place to think that *Authority* in *Governors* here below, takes away all liberty of judging from *Inferiors*, which is the very Doctrine of *Absolute Passive Obedience*. Whereas it is manifest even in the Case of *Parents* and *Children*, both that *Parents* have *Authority* over them, and that they are likewise oblig'd to consider and judge concerning their Commands, whether they be agreeable to the Will of God or no.

Obj.

Obj. 3. This *Author* seems to speak as if He thought our Lord himself had expressly ordained every thing expedient for the well-being of his *Church* in all future Ages, and all Circumstances of God's Worship: and consequently, as if He cannot be supposed to have left any Power to this purpose in the hands of *Church-Governors*. But this doth not appear to have been our Lord's Design. It is fully sufficient that He hath established the *Essentials* of his *Institution*, and provided all things necessary for the *being* of his *Church*: and fully agreeable to his Will, as far as appears, that those who have it in their Power should consult, and prescribe for the *well-being* of it, and for the greater decency of its *Public Offices*. There is no intimation in Scripture either that the External Circumstances of Worship are there to be search'd for, or that they may not be prescribed by any in After-ages, provided that general Rule be observ'd of Consulting Order, and Edification. Nay, the *use* of any Custom in Worship not commanded by our *Saviour*, is as great a *Reflexion* upon the Defectiveness of our *Saviour's Institution*, as the *Prescription* of it is. Yet is there no Performance of the most solemn Offices of Religion without some such, even amongst our *Dissenters* themselves: and it is as void of all Authority from
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Scripture as the *Enjoining* of it, if it be a sufficient Argument against this to say, that it belongs only to *Christ* himself to determine the Circumstances of all the Offices of his Religion. It is manifest, I think, that this was not his Intention, and as manifest that it may be done by future *Governors* agreeably to his Will, because it is possible it may be done to the satisfaction of all sober *Christians*, and to the more orderly and decent Performance of the solemn Offices of Religion.

Obj. 4. It is farther here alleged, that there can be no Authority in any *Governors* to make Prescriptions, because this is to make new additional *Terms of Communion*. And yet this same Author pleads for a Right in every Congregation, that is, the Majority of it, to determine the Circumstantial of their own Worship: which is in effect to make *Terms of Communion* for their Neighbours; to declare that they shall not communicate with them but upon such Conditions; and to debar the scrupulous from all Communion, as they are now debarr'd by the *Established Church*. Whereas if the Crime lie merely in making *Terms of Communion* not enjoined in *Scripture*, it is impossible the Right to this should be in the Congregation, any more than in the *Governors* of the Church.

Now

Now according to my Judgment concerning the making any Prescriptions *Terms of Communion*, no one ill Consequence can be supposed to follow from it, supposing them not disagreeable to the nature of *Christianity*, ordered upon wise and prudent Motives; and not scrupled by any serious *Christians*: which I take to have been the *Case* of our *Prescriptions* at first. I believe truly that those who first ordained them little thought of the consequent Scruples of any good Protestants; and were so far from designing them as Instruments of *Exclusion* to any *Christians*, that they purposely chose them on prudential Motives in hopes of inviting, and bringing many Persons into the Church by their means, and therefore I think acted like good and wise *Governors*, and may be well defended in their Conduct, since something better may be said of these things, when they were first prescribed, than that they were *indifferent*, viz. that there were good and wise Reasons for the Prescription, antecedently to it. As to the insisting on them to the *Exclusion* of numbers of *scrupulous Christians* from *Communion*, I have not argued for it, but only upon the Professions and principles of the *Moderate Dissenters* themselves, in order to induce them to comply with *all*, as well as with *some* of those few Prescriptions which are in the Church.

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As to the Method in which this Power of framing Prescriptions is to be exercised, and concerning which *Difficulties* are here raised, I think it belongs to the Office of those in Power to take any lawful Method put into their hands by Providence, of consulting the advantage of the *Church* committed to their Care. I do not see how the accidental Inconveniences attending the exercise of this Power in any particular method, prove any thing against the Reasonableness of the Power itself; or to what purpose this *Author* urges the unhappy Differences in our late *Convocations* on this Head. He might remember that the *Presbyterian* and *Congregational* Brethren themselves have ever hitherto found *Union*, and *Agreement* in their joint-Consultations very difficult to be attained, and very easy to be broken. And yet I presume they will not be allow'd a good Argument against the Expediency of their acting as an united Body, according to *Regulations* fixed by their mutual Consent.

Obj. 5. But a great *Objection* is here drawn from the Power of the *Civil Magistrate*, and the Inconsistency of this Power in our *Ecclesiastical Superiors* with it. I answer that the Power in *Ecclesiastical Governors* can in no circumstances of the *Church* be so far independent on the *Civil Magistrate*, but that

shall have a right to interpose, so far as to hinder the Church from usurping his Province, or to defend any good and honest Subjects from suffering in their Temporal Concerns on any account merely Ecclesiastical. But the Impositions we are now considering are ordered by the Bishops in conjunction with the Civil Powers; nor is there any the least likelihood of having any thing in our Nation ordered by the one in contradiction to the other: and therefore the Difficulty taken from hence can have no place here. And yet, methinks, of all Men, this Author need not be at a loss for an Answer to this Difficulty who hath utterly precluded the Magistrate from any right to interpose in Cases purely Ecclesiastical, and lodged the Power of decreeing the Circumstantials of Public Worship in every single Congregation. For when He answers this Question, Suppose the Congregation should resolve upon one particular Time for the Celebration of the Communion, and the Civil Magistrate should declare that He will not have his Subjects disturbed by such unnecessary impositions; as they must be who scruple at that Time, and are thereby forced to seek out for other Congregations more to their mind, perhaps at a great and inconvenient distance. Which must here carry it? When I say, He answers this Objection against his own Scheme, others need not despair of finding

ing an Answer for *their* purpose likewise. If the *Congregation* may insist upon this as their right, then here is *Imperium in Imperio*, the very thing, as this *Author* saith, that is so much dreaded, and which threatens endless Feuds. If the *Magistrate* must be listen'd to, then what becomes of the *Right* in every *Congregation* of *Christians* to appoint the *Circumstantials* of their own *Worship*? But I need not have taken any notice of this Difficulty which cannot touch the *Churches* of this *Nation*, any more than of the other *Hem*entions, viz.

Obj. 6. The possible difference between *Bishops* of several *Dioceses*, by which means a total *Uniformity* must be hindred. For this likewise can have no place in our *Church*, in which nothing is prescribed, nor in all likelihood ever can be, but by the Consent of all the *Bishops*, as well as of the *Civil Powers*. But however I shall add, that tho' upon this *Author's* supposition there could not indeed be a *National Uniformity*, yet there might be an *Uniformity* in the *Churches* of the same *Diocese*, which would be much better than none at all. For I take the Case to stand thus. *Uniformity* indeed is not absolutely necessary, nay, in itself it is nothing, but only as it promotes *Order* and *Peace* in the *Church* of *Christ*; and as such it ought not to be ri-

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diculed, or exploded by any who have a value for the Honour of God's Worship, or a desire to see *Charity* flourish amongst *Christians*. Could this be compassed, the Advantages of it would be unspeakable in the removal of those occasions of Quarrel, and Uncharitableness, which have arisen visibly from the want of it in these Nations particularly. Nor could it possibly itself occasion any mischief; tho' the too rigorous enforcing of it may have done so. We must take the World as we find it, and in all things have regard to the Tempers of Mankind. It is a Scandal indeed to the Christian Name, that Brethren should not exercise the heartiest *Christian Love*, towards one another, notwithstanding their different modes of Worship: and yet such is the Weakness of some, and such are the Passions of others, that nothing hath occasion'd greater Animosities, and more scandalous Breaches in the great Law of *Charity*, than this difference in the way of Worship: So that tho' *Uniformity* be not of itself a thing necessary, or of much importance; yet it is manifestly so in a *secondary* degree, considering the unreasonable Tempers of many Men, and how many instances of *Uncharitableness* may be prevented by it. Would it not be happy for all *Christians*, were there no necessity laid upon some of differing from others in their way of Worship?

Have not the *Dissenting Ministers* themselves often in the name of their People, lamented it as an Unhappiness, full of evil Consequences, that they were necessarily oblig'd to set up different ways of *Public Worship*? Doth not this very *Author* think the *Uniformity* of a *Neighbourhood*, and their perfect agreement in one form of *Worship*, an Happiness, and such an Happiness as He would labour to bring about by all due means? And is not this a manifest Acknowledgment that *Uniformity* is a Happiness, as it removes some occasions of *Uncharitableness* among *Christians*? I wish therefore that some Persons would be content, in the management of their *Arguments*, to speak the Truth of things not absolutely necessary; and that whilst they are arguing against the *Extreme* of others, they would not run into the contrary *Extreme* themselves, of vilifying, and depressing those things as of no use, which certainly have their good Consequences in the *Christian Church*.

But tho' I have said thus much in defence of that Power which I had lodged in the hands of our *Ecclesiastical Superiors* against what is here advanced, yet I must inform the Reader that it was not the Authority of the *Bishops* in making *Prescriptions* which I undertook in the *Book* before-mention'd full to defend, or from which I argued for Com-

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pliance in our *Dissenting Brethren*; but from their own *Professions* and *Concessions*, as any one who consults it may see: and therefore it is time now to consider what Mr. Calamy here objects against this part of my Argument, in which I still hope to find a greater strength than He would have his Reader believe. I shall only observe, upon the review, how unaccountable it is that He should amuse the World with *Objections* against the power of *Bishops* to prescribe, drawn from such Difficulties as cannot have place in our Cause: that He should urge the differences in *Convocation* between the *Bishops*, and *Presbyters*; the danger of a *Power* in the Church independent on the *Civil Powers*; the possible disagreement between *Bishops* of several *Dioceses*; when our *Prescriptions* are, and must always be, such as both *Bishops* and *Presbyters* have agreed on; such as the *Civil Power* joins in commanding; and such as are consented to by all the *Bishops* of the Land.

After having made his *Objections* against what in few words I declared concerning the *Authority* of *Ecclesiastical Governors*, this *Author* proceeds to examine what I urge upon the *Principles* and *Professions* of the *Dissenting Ministers* themselves. And here He represents me to his Reader as arguing thus; The *Dissenting Ministers*, in their Arguments a-

gainst this Power in Bishops, neither agree with themselves, nor with one another: therefore the Bishops have this Power, p. 44. And again, p. 48. He states my Argument thus, *The Ejected Ministers would have joined with the Bishops in imposing some things; therefore they had Authority to impose some things.* Nay, p. 49. He pretends to give his Reader my Argument, as I myself stated it. Part I. p. 68. thus; *If the Bishops have Authority to prescribe in one Case, then in another: as if I had argued from their Authority in one Case to their Authority to prescribe in every Case they pleased.* Whereas I have nothing to this purpose in the Page quoted, but something very different from it, viz. that if I could shew that the very same Objections lie against prescribing what the Dissenting Ministers would have complied with, which were brought in their Names against the scrupled Prescriptions, this I should account a good Argument to Them, that the Bishops had Authority to prescribe in the one Case, as well as the other: i. e. in the Case of the three Prescriptions they scrupled, as well as in the Case of the Prescriptions they were ready to comply with which Compliance, according to themselves was an Acknowledgment of the Authority of the Prescribers. I desire therefore, all to take notice that I have no such Arguments as He would fix upon me. It hath been his con-

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stant course to take this liberty with me ; and so I can the more easily bear it. But I am not, as I hope, capable of imposing upon my Reader with any such false reasoning : tho' I may think it not only justifiable, but the best way of arguing with any Persons to do it upon their own Professions, and Concessions. Accordingly my Argument was to this effect, You have professed your readiness to comply with some *Prescriptions*, which you sometimes say is an Acknowledgment of the *Authority* of the *Prescribers* ; therefore you may likewise acknowledge their *Authority* in other *Prescriptions*, as far as your *Compliance* contains in it such an Acknowledgment. The thing to be prov'd was not absolutely that *Bishops* have such an *Authority*, but that the *Dissenting Ministers* might, consistently with some of their own *Professions*, acknowledge such an *Authority*, by complying with it. This is very different from the former *Representations* ; and however I may have been mistaken as to matter of Fact, the way of *Reasoning* is good, and just, tho' that which this *Author* would fix upon me, is false and ridiculous. I built it upon his own repeated Words, that the *Dissenting Ministers* could not comply with the *Prescriptions*, because the *Prescribers* had no *Authority*, from whence I concluded that they judged *Compliance* to be an Acknowledgment

ledgment of their *Authority*: otherwise there can be no force in the *Argument*. Notwithstanding this, I found it related by the same *Author* that they were ready to comply in the use of some *Prescriptions*. Upon which I argued, that they who by Compliance acknowledge the *Authority* of *Prescribers* in one case, may acknowledge it in another, as far as Compliance implies such an Acknowledgment: and I instanced in the *Prescriptions* about *Time*, *Place*, and *Liturgy*, as what the *Dissenting Ministers* had professed a readiness to comply with. Let us now see what is reply'd to this.

1. This *Author* (supposing I had in my eye the *Managers* of the *Conference* at the *Savoy*) saith, that supposing they went too far, and were at times overseen, it doth not follow that they are herein to be imitated. I grant it. No Persons are to be followed in their Errors. But, I pray, from whence can we possibly collect the Judgment, and Principles of the *Dissenting Ministers*, unless from those who write, and transact in their Names, and are esteem'd as the greatest, and most excellent Men amongst them? I should think they might have as many Followers amongst their *Brethren*, as Mr. Calamy, or any other Person who had gone off from their Principles; and judge it as much to my purpose to argue from their Professions, and

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Principles as from those of any amongst them. But this *Author* may assure himself that I was not so weak as to intend my Arguments drawn from their Professions for the use of any Persons but such as are of the same Mind with them, and I hope it may be allowed proper upon some occasions to argue with Men upon their own Principles. But least any one should think them so utterly forsaken by their *Brethren* and *Followers* in their readiness to comply in those Instances, at that time, I can assure Him upon the Testimony of this *Author* himself, if he were the *Author* of the *Abridgment* of Mr. Baxter's Life, that there was the same readiness in the *Dissenting Ministers* as well as *People*, to comply in those Instances, in the beginning of the late *Reign*. I will transcribe his own words from that *Abridgment*, p. 655. where He is speaking of the *Alterations* then design'd. *Thus much I shall venture to say, that such Amendments as those were, with such an allowance in the point of Orders for Ordination by Presbyters as is made, 13. Eliz. cap. 12. would in all probability have brought in two thirds of the Dissenters in England.* I confess I thought that upon so good an Authority I might have ventured to say what I did, especially in a *Debate* with himself. But now I begin to think it impossible for me to Judge, even from his own words, either what his own *Principles* are, or what

what the *Principles* of those whose Cause He maintains. There cannot be a more positive Declaration than this, which yet, it seems, imports no such thing as I have fixed upon it.

2. It is reply'd, That the *Managers* of the *Dissenting Cause* at the *Savoy-Conference* were so far from owning the *Authority* of *Bishops* to prescribe, that it is manifest to all who will peruse the *Papers* relating to that Affair, that they positively disown'd all such *Authority*. I answer, that it is as manifest to all who will peruse my *Book* without the prejudices of this *Author*, that I tax them not with owning any such *Authority* in words, but only with a readiness to join, and comply, in some *Prescriptions*, which they themselves judged an acknowledgment of *Authority* in the *Prescribers*; and consequently that this *Author* mistakes and misrepresents me when He would fix any other meaning upon my words.

3. It is reply'd, That the *Managers* of the *Conference* are misrepresented by me, for as much as they never were ready to comply with the *Constant Use* of the *Liturgie*, but always declared against it, if it should be rigorously imposed; and also that He himself could not comply with the *Constant use* of it tho' amended to his Mind; or with the *Prescription* of one certain *Time* for the *Communion*, in exclusion to all other. To which Answer,

1. His *Declarations* concerning Himself are of small importance in a Cause, in which I must consider the generally receiv'd Principles of the *Dissenting Ministers*, and not the peculiarities of any particular Man. But if they be true, I infer from hence that He is not of the number of those in whose Name He made the foregoing Declaration, concerning a readiness to comply, upon the *Amendments* lately design'd. For I never heard but that the use of the *Liturgy* so amended was to have been as *constant* as it is now,

2. Neither can He himself, nor the *Managers* of the *Savoy-Conference*, even according to his present *Representation*, possibly evade the force of my Argument. As for the *Managers* of that *Conference*, He doth not pretend but that they were ready to comply with the *Prescription* of one particular *Time* for the *Celebration* of the *Communion*: which is sufficient for my present purpose, as appears from this *Author's* declaring against it as an *unnecessary Term* of *Communion*. And as for both *Them* and *Himself*, He acknowledges, even in this *Introduction*, a readiness to comply with the *Prescription* of the *ordinary Use* of a *Liturgy*, and of one particular *Time* for the *Celebration* of the *Holy Sacrament*. And what need I desire any more? For the *Liturgy* prescribed for *ordinary Use* is still a *Prescription*, and in his own Account, an unnecessary

cessary *Prescription*: And they who can comply with such a *Prescription*, and by that means (as themselves interpret such a *Compliance*) acknowledge the Authority of the *Prescriber*, may as well comply with the *Scrupled Prescriptions*, notwithstanding any force in that *Question* so often put, By what *Authority* are they enjoyn'd? To comply ordinarily with *Terms* which ordinarily exclude scrupulous *Christians* from *Communion* is no more lawful, than to comply with such *Terms* as always exclude them: Nor have the *Bishops* any more *Authority* to prescribe *Circumstantials* for the ordinary use of the *Church*, than they have to prescribe for the *Constant* use of it. And therefore I argue still after the like manner, If *Compliance* be an acknowledgment of the *Authority* of the *Prescriber*, how can it be justified to be ready to comply ordinarily with those things, which no one hath *Authority* ordinarily to prescribe; and at the same time to refuse *Compliance* with what is constantly prescribed, meerly for want of *Authority* in the *Prescribers*? And again, If the *Authority* of the *Prescribers* may be owned (as far as *Compliance* owns it) in the one Case, why not in the other? So that we see, the *Bishops* having no more *Authority* in the one Case than in the other, the Argument drawn from their want of *Authority* doth conclude against *Compliance* in the one Case as

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well as in the other ; and that the *Dissenting Ministers* may, agreeably to their own Professions (even as they are represented in this *Introduction*) own their *Authority* in both Cases, as far as by *Compliance* they can be interpreted to own it. But,

3. Whatever Mr. Calamy may please to say in this *Introduction*, I still insist upon it that the *Dissenting Ministers* have been ready to comply with the use of the *Common-Prayer Book*, amended, as constantly prescribed as it is now. I did not apprehend myself oblig'd to confine my Argument to the *Managers* of the *Savoy-Conference*, tho this *Author* hath thought it for his purpose to do it for me: but judg'd it proper to consider not only their Professions at that time, but what hath been since declared in the name of the *Dissenting Ministers*. And I thought myself secure in what I fixed upon them, having built it upon the above-mention'd Declaration of this *Author* himself. And I therefore still insist upon it. Either those *Amendments* designed at the beginning of the late *Reign* with an *Allowance* for Ordination by *Presbyters* would have brought in Two Thirds of the *Dissenters*, or not. If not, then Mr. Calamy hath misinformed the World. If they would, then it is certain that the *Dissenting Ministers*, the most judicious of them, were then ready to comply with the *Constant* use of the *Com-*

mon-Prayer Book so amended; and consequently that what I affirm of them is true, and the Argument built upon this Profession of theirs, just and good: as this *Author* indeed seems to own by endeavouring to avoid the force of it after such a manner. If the *Disfenting Ministers* were thus disposed to a *Compliance*, I hope it is no Crime to argue with them upon the acknowledged lawfulness of that *Compliance*. If they were not, the only fair way that this *Author* can take to answer what I alleged, is to own that He misrepresented them, and not tax me with what I took entirely upon his Word. I am persuaded that He himself was of the Number of those in whose name He made the fore-mentioned Declaration. And I am heartily sorry that I have had any hand in driving him from so good a Disposition. I wish He had found out some better way of dealing with my Arguments than to represent Himself, and his *Brethren* at a greater distance from all tendency to a *Compliance* than they ever yet professed themselves. But it seems, rather than any of my Reasonings shall appear to have any weight, He will unwarily reject even his own Testimony, and put any Advantage into the hands of those, who will be sure to use it upon all occasions, to the prejudice of that *Body of Men*, whose Cause He undertakes to maintain. From what I have said in *Vin-*

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lication of this Argument taken from the Principles and Professions of the Dissenting Ministers it manifestly follows, not indeed that Bishops have Authority to prescribe things antecedently unnecessary under the Penalty of No Communion, which, absolutely consider'd, was not the Point I undertook: but that the Dissenting Ministers have owned their Authority in the Prescription of some things antecedently unnecessary, as far as Compliance owns it; and consequently may lawfully acknowledge it in the scrupled Prescriptions as far as Compliance is an acknowledgment of it. Or thus, that as They were ready to comply with some Prescriptions, notwithstanding the want of Authority in the Prescribers, so They may as reasonably comply with the scrupled Prescriptions, notwithstanding the Objection taken from the want of Authority in the Prescribers. And thus much may suffice to shew how the Reply of this Author on this Head is founded upon his own Mistake, and Misrepresentation.

One Argument I used in favour of the first Prescribers was, That they had ordered nothing but what if all would seriously comply with, is certainly for the good of the Church: by which I chiefly meant, that the things prescribed are of that nature, that Universal Compliance with them, supposing them not scrupled by any, would not be the Cause

Cause of any ill Consequence, but of many good ones. To which this *Author* replies *As if it would justify an Usurper that his Administration was managed for the good of the Community.* Answer, 1. There may be a Duty incumbent upon an *Usurper* when he is in possession: and tho' the benefit of his Administration to the Community will not justify him in the unjust acquiring of his Power, yet will it justify the manner of his Administration of it: which is the Point now before us. But, 2. I cannot understand upon what Principles He calls those *Usurpers* whom in other places He acknowledgeth to be *lawful Governors*. This Reply supposeth them to use their Power for the good of the Church, and yet it seems they are no better than *Usurpers*; and be the Exercise of it never so much for the advantage of the Church, it must according to this Reply be disowned and opposed. And is this too agreeable to the Professions that have been made in the name of the *Dissenting Ministers*, to declare against Compliance with the *Episcopal Power* even tho' the *Bishops* had never extended to any Commands but what are for the good of the Church? It was but just now that this *Author* declared a readiness to comply with the ordinary Prescription of a Liturgy from whence it follows, I should think, that He judges our *Ecclesiastical Governors* may be justified

justify'd in the Prescription of the ordinary use of that; and consequently I should have been apt to have fixed it upon him as his Principle, that the *Bishops* might be justify'd in the prescribing what is truly for the good of the *Church*, did not I now know by experience how dangerous it is to tax him even with his own Acknowledgments, which can as easily be contradicted as made. Why are you ready to comply with the *Prescription* of the ordinary use of a *Liturgy*? It must be either because the *Bishops* have a right to prescribe it; or because it is for the general good of the *Church*. If because they have *Authority* to prescribe it, then you acknowledge they have *Authority* to prescribe a thing antecedently unnecessary, which will ordinarily exclude scrupulous Christians from *Communion*. If merely because it is for the good of the *Church*, then *Compliance* may be practised, notwithstanding the want of *Authority* in the *Prescribers*. But my Business here was not to prove that the *Bishops* had a Right to the Power they possess, but that they had exercised their Power well, supposing they had prescribed nothing but what, if universally comply'd with, is for the good of the *Christian Church*: and consequently, this *Author*, after his usual manner, hath here likewise mistaken me.

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After this I proceed to argue with the *Dissenting Ministers* concerning their *Objection* taken from the *Disproportion* of the *Penalty*. And I reason upon their own Principles; If this be sufficient to make a *Command unlawful*, this will make the *Prescription* of a *Liturgy*, or a particular *Time* for *Worship* unlawful, which yet they have professed a readiness to *comply* with. This *Author* replies that this readiness to a constant Compliance in these Instances is *particularly denied*. I answer, There was a *Time* when it was *particularly*, and solemnly owned even by *himself*; as I have proved from his own Words, in which He professeth a readiness in the greatest part of the *Dissenters* to comply with the *Liturgy* amended, in which there was to be, a particular *Office* for the *Celebration* of the *Communion*, and a particular *Time* for it, as *constantly* to be observed, and as much *exclusive* of all others, as the *Present*. Nay, if I were not now better acquainted with the Person I am arguing with, I should have ventur'd to affirm that, when the *Dissenting Ministers*, as He here affirms, p. 46. professed a readiness *to be determined by the Civil Magistrate in such things, as being merely Circumstantial, are common to Humane Actions, and Societies*, they never thought of excepting out of this Number, a particular *Time* for *Worship* exclusive of all others.

But,

But, however that be, I will take *Him*, and his *Brethren* in their present Disposition, before He hath thought himself oblig'd to revoke what He last said. And I desire him to consider whether the *prescribing* the ordinary use of the *Liturgy* (whatever indeterminate Idea He may have to that Word) be not the enjoining an unnecessary *Circumstance* of *Worship* under a *disproportionate Penalty*. For how that can be done without the ordinary *Exclusion* of many *scrupulous Christians*, I am not able to think. And whether this *Penalty* for their *Non-compliance* be not *disproportionable*, I leave to this *Author* to consider. Indeed, I wish I could tell exactly what He means by the *ordinary* use of a *Liturgy*, which He saith He could comply with. If He mean, that He would not so oblige himself to this, but that He would leave himself the *Liberty* of taking another method, and leaving the *Church Established* whenever He shall judge it in his Conscience more for the *Glorification* of God, and more agreeable to his Will; as He seems to mean in the beginning of *p. 50*. I know no one in the *Church* at present who obligeth himself to the use of the *Liturgy*, or to *Conformity* on any other *Terms*. If He mean that He cannot consent to be so tied up, as not to have the *Liberty* likewise of *Praying* as He seeth fit, upon particular occasions, in public; as He seems to do, *p.*

49, and 53. He knows that this *Liberty* is both allow'd, and taken in the Church at present. If He mean that He will not be so tied up to the use of a *Form* at the *Communion*, as that He will not administer it without one to those who *scruple* a *Form*; as He seems to do, p. 50. I desire to know whether there is any ground to suppose that any such scrupulous Persons will think of refusing him for their *Pastor* who ordinarily useth a *set Form* of *Prayer* in the *Public Worship*; whether any such Persons will ever desire to join with him in the *Celebration* of the *Communion*; whether if they do, it may not be as reasonable a proceeding in this Case, as He seems to think it in the Case of his own *Scheme of Independent Congregations*, p. 51. first to endeavour to remove their *Scruples*, and if that be found impossible, then to refer them to a *Congregation* suited to their own *Scruples*. But here I must put him in mind that He is as much oblig'd ordinarily to receive such scrupulous Persons to *Communion*, as He is ever to receive them; and therefore if He means by this *Profession*, that He is ready at one time of the day to comply with the ordinary use of a *Form* of *Prayer* at the *Celebration* of the *Communion*, provided He may likewise at another Hour of the Day celebrate it without a *Form*; that

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is, that He would willingly officiate in a *Conforming Congregation*, provided He might likewise minister in a *Dissenting Congregation*; this is indeed a very particular sort of *Conformity* to an *Established Church*, being much the same with *Nonconformity* itself.

But because I have found it a very precarious, and uncertain way of arguing with this *Author* from the Professions of *Himself*, and his *Brethren*, I am willing upon this Head to try another Method, and argue from *his*, and *their Universal Practice*. And here I desire to know, by what *Authority* the *Civil Powers* require the *Subscription* of all *Dissenting Ministers* to *Thirty Six Articles* under the penalty of being hinder'd from preaching the *Gospel*: If they have no *Authority* to do this, (as it will be hard to prove they have upon Mr. Calamy's new *Scheme*) Submission ought no more to be paid to *them* in their *Impositions* than to the *Bishops*. If this be a *disproportionable Penalty* which is here annexed to their *Scruples*, this Command is as *unlawful* as the *scrupled Commands* of the *Bishops*: and Compliance with it as unjustifiable. Nor will it be a sufficient Reply to this to find out some different Circumstances between this *Imposition*, and those of the *Church*. The *Question* here is, whether the *Magistrate* have *Authority* to enjoin this *Subscription*, and whether it be not impos'd

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under a disproportionable Penalty: which I leave to this *Author* to consider, and then to answer, how it comes to pass that the want of *Authority*, or the annexing a *disproportionable Penalty*, should render *Compliance* unreasonable, and a *Command* unlawful in *one Case*, and not in *another*. And by this time surely, the *Reader* may understand that it was my Design under this Head to argue with the *Dissenting Ministers* upon their own Professions, and Principles; that I had a just Foundation so to do; and might with reason put the like way of arguing upon their own Principles into the Mouths of *others*, in order to shew them the Unreasonableness, and Unconclusiveness of it.

I come now to their *Objection* taken from *Rom. 14.* which I fully consider'd in my *First Book*, p. 88. &c. where I endeavour to shew, That this *Chapter* cannot be proved to relate to *Prescriptions* concerning *God's Worship*, 1. Because it cannot be proved to extend to all Scruples concerning matters in themselves indifferent. 2. Because *St. Paul* himself made such *Prescriptions*. 3. Because they who urge it have, notwithstanding this *Chapter*, professed their readiness to comply in some *Prescriptions* by which several scrupulous Persons must unavoidably be excluded from *Communion*. To the *first* of these this *Author* replies, that *St. Paul* doth not appear to make any difference

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rence in the Scruples of weak Persons concerning things in themselves not necessary. And I answer that for any thing that appears in this *Chapter*, He might make a difference: it being no Contradiction at all for him to command that Persons who scrupled particular *Meats* and *Drinks* should be loved as *Brethren*, and be received to *Church-Communion*; and at the same time not to intend by this that such as scrupled the *settled Customs* received or enjoined in the *Religious Worship* in any *Church* should be, notwithstanding this, receiv'd to *Communion* in that *Church*. There may be other *Reasons* for it: but I say this *Chapter* doth not necessarily imply it. And therefore at least, it cannot be demonstrated to be a *Duty* from this *Chapter*. Mr. Calamy hath advanced nothing here to prove it, but Affirmations that it is so. That it was no Contradiction in *Sr. Paul* to command the *one*, and not to intend the *other*, is an Argument that He might command the *one*, and yet not intend the *other*. That He thought it no Contradiction is evident from his own Practice, which was another thing I observ'd. For He who commanded the one sort of *scrupulous Persons* to be receiv'd, did himself, by positive Prescription, in effect, command another sort of *scrupulous Persons* to be rejected. He made *Prescriptions* himself about matters, antecedently

dently unnecessary, relating to Religious Worship; and by these excluded, in effect, such as should scruple Compliance with them. The *former* of these I urged for the Lawfulness of some *Prescriptions*: and chiefly as an Argument to those, who I found had argu'd from St. Paul's not making *Prescriptions* against the Lawfulness of it in other Church-Governors. But this our *Author* hath thought fit carefully to suppress: which makes it the more necessary for me here to repeat it. An Argument was drawn from St. Paul's not interposing in the *Cases* mention'd in this Chapter against any Church-Governors interposing. To which it was very proper to answer by another Argument drawn from his making some *Prescriptions*: it being imply'd in their Argument, that if St. Paul himself had interposed with any *Prescriptions*, this might have been at least a pretence for other Governors to interpose in the like *Cases*. I now argue farther upon this Argument of theirs, after the following manner. The *Cases* here intended by St. Paul can be only those in which He did not himself think fit to interpose. But He himself thought fit to interpose in the case of *Christians* Behaviour in Religious Assemblies. Therefore this *Case* could not be in this Chapter intended by him. And again, If it had been St. Paul's Intention, as it hath always hitherto been represented,

ented, to lay it down as his Judgment that
 no *Prescriptions*, about the *Circumstances* of
Worship in themselves unnecessary, should be
 made; and that weak Persons who scruple
 such *Prescriptions* should, notwithstanding
 their *Scruples*, be receiv'd to *Communion*: It,
 say, this had been his Intention in this
 Chapter, it had been a *Contradiction* to this,
 even for himself afterwards to have made
 any such *Prescriptions*, which must have ex-
 cluded any Persons supposed to be *scrupulous*,
 as this *Author* acknowledgeth they must;
 and consequently I justly observ'd that St.
Paul no more intended this in this Chapter,
 than He means to contradict himself. This
 was a sufficient *Reply* to the *Argument* as it
 hath hitherto been urged from this Chapter:
 and how could I know beforehand that this
Author would have recourse to an Interpretation
 of it wholly new? But if there had
 been no other way but this of defending the
Objection drawn from it; yet He ought, I
 think, to have let his *Reader* know, that I
 had answer'd the *Objection* as it had been
 formerly urged, tho' He himself had now
 another Interpretation of this Chapter to al-
 lege to the same purpose. And if I under-
 stand him aright, He would now represent
Paul in this Chapter, designing only to
 bid other *Church-Governors*, who had not
 measure of the *Spirit*, to make any *Pre-*
scriptions

scriptions about *Unnecessary Circumstances* of
 Worship; but to reserve to himself the
 Power of doing it: to order that Persons
 who scrupled such *Prescriptions* of others
 should notwithstanding be receiv'd to *Com-*
munion, tho' those who should scruple any
 such *Prescriptions* of his own, should not.
 which is such a Representation of the *Apo-*
stle's meaning, as I confess I cannot but
 wonder at. For it is manifest to any who
 attentively read this *Chapter*, and the be-
 ginning of the next, that if He deliver any
 thing in this place in order to preclude any
 Persons from making *Prescriptions* in the
Cases here intended, He declares himself at
 the same time precluded from it; that what-
 ever Scruples He here intends, He orders
 that they should be born with, without
 having regard to his own *Prescriptions* any
 more than to others; that if *Christians* be
 be receiv'd to *Communion* notwithstanding
 the *Scruples* here intended, so it must be un-
 versally, and without exception; and that
 the Rules of Behaviour here laid down ob-
 lige all *Christians*, from the highest *Apos-*
 to the meanest *Late*. The Importance of the
 whole is manifestly this, that it is the Duty
 of *Christians* to bear with such Infirmities
 of one another as are there intended; to
 love, and receive one another notwithstanding
 such Weaknesses, and Scruples as are there
 intended.

there intended; to bear one another's Burthen; not to condemn one another in their different Apprehensions and Behaviour with relation to the things there intended; to seek the good of others more than their own private Satisfaction, in the Conduct of themselves in the Points there design'd; for all which He useth such Arguments as oblige himself as strongly as the *Christian Laity* He wrote to. And that no one may think He layeth down Rules for others, and not for himself, He concludes the whole in his own Person, as well as that of others, *We then that are strong ought to bear the Infirmities of the weak, &c.* I therefore argue thus, whatever in this place He forbids to other *Christians*, He declares equally forbidden to himself: whatever he enjoins other Christians, he declares equally incumbent upon himself. If therefore he here forbid to any other *Christians* the making *Prescriptions* about the Behaviour of their *Brethren* in God's Worship, he declares it equally forbidden to himself. If he here enjoin the receiving to *Communion* any who should scruple such *prescriptions* of others, he here enjoins the same with respect to his own. But it is manifest from his own Behaviour that he thought it proper to make such *Prescriptions*; therefore it follows that the *Rules* here laid down cannot be extended to the forbidding such *Pre-*

Prescriptions; or to the receiving such to actual and external *Communion* in a particular Church, as scruple such *Prescriptions*. Let it be observ'd, that I do not here say there may not be other *Reasons* for this: but I say there is nothing in this *Chapter* to this purpose. Those two Evangelical Precepts, *Judge not*; and, *Love one another*, are in my opinion an *Epitome* of this *Chapter*; and may as well be urged against any *Ecclesiastical Prescriptions* as what is alleged from hence. Thus have I again clear'd this matter, and shewn from *St. Paul's Practice*, that there is nothing in this *Chapter* against the Power of *Church-Governors* to prescribe, in answer to this new account of *St. Paul's* design in this place.

As for any Argument from *St. Paul's Example* ample to justify the *Prescriptions* of *Later Church-Governors*, I urged not any such as absolutely concluding, but with respect to others, in whose way of reasoning it was implied that his Example would be of some Consideration in this Case. But I acknowledge a great difference between the *Direction*, and consequently the *Authority* of the one, and of the other: notwithstanding which there may be other Arguments for a sufficient Authority in *Later Church-Governors* to prescribe what is as truly for the Decency of God's Worship, as his *Prescriptions* were.

But I can't but think it a little, and poor
 Exception which is here made against my
 way of Expression: as if it were not all one
 to say, *St. Paul* prescribed such a Custom
 merely because it was decent; and to say,
St. Paul prescribed it on that and another
 Account also, because he was directed to do it:
 since he ought never to be supposed exempt
 from the direction of the Holy Spirit; and
 was directed to this by the Holy Spirit mere-
 ly for the Decency of God's Worship. It is
 said likewise p. 59. that *St. Paul's* Prescriptions
 were about things not properly indifferent; that
 they were expedient, and founded upon Moral
 Reasons. I grant it as far as Decency, and
 Order make things so. And in this sense,
Knelling at the Communion is not properly
 indifferent, but expedient, and founded up-
 on Moral Reasons. And the serious use of
Godfathers is expedient in an higher sense, as
 might be of great usefulness in the *Chri-*
stian Church: So likewise is the use of a good
Liturgy in the *Public Worship*. But this
 Observation doth not shew at all that *St.*
Paul did not prescribe some things not an-
 tedently necessary in the sense in which
 those Words have been used in this
 controversy about the *Prescriptions* in our
 Church.

There

There was another way of arguing I made use of to shew that St. Paul design'd not any thing in the 14th. Chap. to the *Romans*, against the Power of *Church-Governors* to prescribe, built upon the Concessions, and Declarations of the *Dissenting Ministers* themselves. This Mr. Calamy hath thought fit wholly to omit: and I therefore now insist upon it with some Additions.

1. If the Design of this Chapter were to forbid future *Church-Governors* to make any Prescriptions by which any scrupulous Christians may be excluded from external Communion with their Brethren, then it forbids the Prescription of the constant use of a Liturgy; which yet this Author in his *Abridgement* declares the greatest part of the *Dissenters* ready to comply with, as I have before shewn. And I argue, if they can comply with that, notwithstanding any thing in this Chapter, they may likewise with others Prescriptions notwithstanding the Rule here laid down by St. Paul.

2. If the Design of this Chapter be what this Author represents it to be, it likewise much forbids the Prescription of the ordinary use of a Liturgy, as it doth any other, because by this it cannot be but that many scrupulous Christians must be excluded; and whatsoever this Chapter commands or forbids, it commands or forbids ordinarily as well as constantly.

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stantly. Notwithstanding this, Mr. Calamy assures us in this *Introduction*, not only that other *Dissenting Ministers* have declar'd a willingness, but that even *He* himself is willing to comply with the Prescription of the ordinary use of a *Liturgy*. From whence conclude that he may likewise comply with other *Prescriptions*, notwithstanding any thing in this *Chapter*.

3. I desire it may be consider'd whether this *Chapter*, according to the Account given of it by some, do not likewise forbid the making *unnecessary Prescriptions* concerning *Ministers*, which must exclude the scrupulous from the *Ministry*; the requiring of them, for instance, the *Subscription* of Thirty *Articles* in order to their *Ministration*: or why should not this *Chapter* be likewise interpreted to this effect, that Persons being duly qualify'd for *Ministers* ought to be received, and protected as such, tho' they should chance to differ from others in one, or more of those numerous Points treated of, and imply'd in these *Articles*? And if notwithstanding this, such an *unnecessary Prescription* as *this* can readily be comply'd with by the *Dissenting Ministers*, I see not how this *Chapter* can hinder them from complying with others.

4. If

4. If this Chapter take from all any right of making choice of such *Circumstantial* of *Worship*, as exclude *scrupulous Christians* from *Communion*, then doth it likewise from every one of the *Independent Congregations* in Mr. Calamy's new Scheme. According to this Interpretation of it, it will not be lawful for the Majority of any one of them to agree upon the *Constant*, or *Ordinary* use of a *Liturgy*, though they should think their *Edification* never much promoted by it, which is very hard in a Scheme that pretends to so much Liberty. For by this means many *scrupulous Christians* will be either constantly, or ordinarily excluded; and according to this Interpretation, it is the Duty of this Congregation not to refer the *scrupulous Persons* to other Congregations, (a method this Author on a like occasion recommends,) but itself to receive them to *Communion* without any attempt to send them to more distant Congregations, in which no *Liturgy* is used. How otherwise the *Rules* laid down in this Chapter, according to his Interpretation, can be observ'd I see not. Nay, I see not but that according to him, *St. Paul* must be supposed in this Chapter to prescribe *Impossible* things. For if he here prescribe any thing concerning receiving to *Church-Communion*, it must be understood of receiving the *scrupulous* here intended to a joint-participation

of *Christ's* Ordinances, at the same time, and the same place. But suppose the Majority of a particular Congregation agreed upon a particular Time, and a particular Form of Prayer, for the Celebration of the *Lord's-supper*; and suppose these two Particulars scrupled by some honest *Christians*; I desire to know what must be done. It is impossible they should be receiv'd to a common and joint-celebration of this Solemnity: and for the Minister to admit them to *Communion* at a distinct time by themselves no more answers the intent of this Chapter, than the absolute refusal of them. For if it respect *Church-Communion* at all, it must have a respect to the receiving all at the same time: And besides, being directed to the *Christian Laity*, and not peculiarly to the *Clergy*, it cannot otherwise be comply'd with, but by receiving the scrupulous there spoken of at the same time at which themselves communicate. For how, I pray, can They be said to receive one another to *Communion*, who communicate unavoidably at distinct Times? This, I think, is a Demonstration that St. Paul could not in this Chapter speak with respect to such Scruples as we are concern'd about; unless he can be suppos'd to enjoin impossibilities, and Contradictions: and this, I hope, no one will fix upon him. At least it is a Demonstration that such Scruples are

not here intended, as are inconsistent with Christians communicating with one another at the same time; and consequently that *St. Paul* must not be suppos'd here to speak of all sorts of Scruples: and this is enough to overthrow the Interpretation of this *Author*.

These and the like Considerations make me think that *St. Paul* could not intend in this *Chapter*, to lay down *Rules* to any other purpose but this, that Christians should love one another, and do all good Offices to one another, notwithstanding their smaller Differences; that they should not be free to condemn one another for the sake of such indifferent matters, as *Eating*, or not *Eating* such particular sorts of Food; that the *Strong*, i. e. Persons of Judgment, and Understanding, should in all such Cases bear with the Infirmities, and Mistakes of the *weak*: all which Rules, I am persuaded, may be observ'd without admitting *honest scrupulous Christians* of all sorts to the external Celebration of the Offices of Religion in every particular Church. But however this be, I hope Mr. Calamy will consider with himself how to reconcile this *Chapter* with his own *Professions*, and his own Scheme, as well as how to object it to others.

After

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After I had answer'd the *Objection* of the *Dissenting Ministers* taken from the 14th. Chap. to the *Romans*, I proceeded to shew *Reas. of Conf. r. I. p. 96.* that *themselves* were not free from what they call *Unnecessary Impositions*: and I instanced in the practice of Mr. *Baxter*, than whom no Man hath more Followers amongst them; and of the *Independents*, a numerous part of them; laying nothing to their charge but what I found said of them by this *Author* himself. The *Summ* of the Answer is, that this will not prove *Unscriptural Impositions* lawful. Nor was I so weak as to produce for that purpose. But I hope it may be a good Argument to the Followers of Mr. *Baxter*, and the *Independents*, that it is not justifiable to separate from the *Establish'd Church* in order to witness against *Impositions*; and at the same time to practise the same thing much complain'd of, and to comply with in their own *Churches*.

Thus have I endeavour'd to answer all the *Objections* of this *Author* against what I have formerly advanced concerning *Ecclesiastical Impositions* in the *Established Church*. The second thing I undertook in answer to this *Introduction*, was,

II. To consider that *Scheme of Liberty* which is here propos'd by Mr. *Calamy*, in opposition to the *Established Method*; that so

we may see whether *that* be free from the same, or the like *Objections* to those he hath made to the *Established Method*. For if it do not appear at last to be so, this will I think furnish a great Argument for an universal Compliance with the *Establishment*: it being a just ground for our adhering to *that*, rather than separating from it, that those who have most oppos'd it, and given themselves most *Liberty* to invent *Methods* and *Schemes* to set up against it, have not been able to propose one to the World but what is liable to many of those *Objections*, and *Inconveniences* which have been chiefly insisted on by this very *Author*, and his *Brethren* in the *Writings* against the *Cause* of *Conformity*. Now,

First, I see not any Advantage to the *Scrupulous* in this *Scheme*, which they are not certain of enjoying under *that* to which I am pressing *Conformity*. For I am not ashamed to own it as my Judgment, that together with the most perfect *Establishment* that can be framed by Man, there ought always to be a *Toleration* and Protection for such *Weak* and *Honest* Christians as are good and peaceable Subjects to the *Civil Constitution*: and no other force used towards such but the force of sober, and good Reasoning. And observe this the rather, because Mr. Calamy

hath been pleased in many places to drop such Expressions as naturally lead his Reader to think that all who plead for Conformity to the Church of England, are as zealous against the Toleration of Dissenters as they are for their Compliance with the Establishment. So that as to this he hath no Advantage in his Scheme which I have not in mine.

Again, He will allow it an Advantage in his own Scheme, that all near Neighbours should join in the same Form of Worship, and would think it not only a lawful, but friendly Office to endeavour to remove the Scruples of those who otherwise would differ from their Neighbours: I desire likewise that a more extended Uniformity may be thought an Advantage to a Christian Nation; and that it may not be judg'd an unchristian or unfriendly Office to endeavour to promote it in the way of fair, and serious Reasoning. However, this I am sure of, that as all that he can pretend to in his own way, with respect to scrupulous Neighbours, is first to endeavour to remove their Scruples by sober Discourse, and if that prove unsuccessful, afterwards to refer them to other more distant Congregations; which is the Method he proposes on this Occasion; so likewise may the same sort of Persons be dealt with in the way already establish'd after the same manner, viz. if their Scruples be incurable

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by the only Christian method of serious *Argument*, they must be left to the use of that *Liberty* which is allow'd them. But if this *Author* should ask, What if the *Civil Magistrate* should debar them of all such *Liberty*? I reply by asking the same Question, if his *Scheme* of *Independent Congregations* were universally receiv'd, What if the *Magistrate* should require all within such a District to join with such a particular *Congregation*? I think it full as likely that in such an *Establishment* as He hath invented, the *Magistrate* should press, and command the *Uniformity* of a *Neighbourhood*, as that in any other form of *Establishment*, He should press, and command the *Uniformity* of a *Nation*. And if He reply that the contrary Supposition is one part of that *Scheme* which He propo-
seth; I answer, the like Supposition is part of my *Scheme* likewise, and what I shall always contend for under the present *Established Scheme* as zealously as He can do for it under any other *Scheme* he can think of.

Secondly, I see not but that this new *Scheme* must be attended with Circumstances, and Consequences as bad, if not worse than what are seen to belong to the present *Establishment*. For,

1. The

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1. The same sort of evil Consequences will be found to follow upon the multitude of different modes of Worship set up upon the Scheme now before us, that are seen to follow upon those differences of Worship now amongst us; and these in greater number, proportionable to that greater variety of Modes which must this way be introduc'd into our Churches. I must beg leave here to suppose that Mankind will have much the same Passions, and the same Tempers, even when this Scheme is established, that they have now. And can any one imagine that a number of Neighbours will not be disgusted that they must either conform to what they do not like, or else be sent to some distant place for an opportunity of Worship? Can any one think that there will not be upon such occasions, frequent, and zealous efforts for gathering Churches out of Churches, and Violences amongst Neighbours to as great a degree as ever yet hath been known? We see this practis'd in some places amongst the Dissenters themselves at present, and made the occasion of great Heats, and Uncharitableness amongst themselves, even whilst the contrary is so much their peculiar Interest; and may we not expect the like, or infinitely worse, when there will be no such thing as a Common Cause, and a Common Interest, but every Preacher will have a peculiar Inter-

rest of his own to bias him, and every Congregation particular Notions, and Schemes of their own, of which I doubt not to say they will be generally as tenacious, as if they knew them to be of *Apostolical Institution*? All will endeavour, (or at least so profess,) to agree upon nothing but what they are directed to by the Will and Example of *Christ*, and his *Apostles*; and so the Forms established in every particular Congregation being all esteem'd to be *Jure Divino*, or *Jure Apostolico*, the Zeal of Men will run high for their own Constitutions, and infinite must be the Disputations, and remarkable the Heat, and Zeal which will be occasion'd by these means. For nothing warms Mens Heads like any Question that concerns their own Form of Worship, especially when they themselves have had the ordering of all that relates to it.

2. Supposing all in one Parish unanimous, and to consent and acquiesce in the same Form of Worship, the Inconveniencies, and evil Consequences must be still much greater than they would be, supposing all in all Parishes to consent, and acquiesce in the Form already established. For by such an universal *Uniformity* all those occasions of Disputation, and Violence which are admitted by the Differences in Religious Worship, are wholly removed: whereas a *Parochial*

chial Uniformity may be maintained, and yet it may remain too probable that numberless instances of Heat, and Violence, and Uncharitableness will proceed from the distinct ways of Worship agreed upon in every distinct *Neighbourhood*.

3. As these, and the like evil Consequences would too probably be seen even after the Settlement of each particular Congregation in their several Forms of Worship; so I fear the like, and much greater may be expected at the *Time* when such Settlement is making. For then every Man will come prepar'd with his own Opinion, and many with an Expectation that their particular Judgment should be regarded; and all the Follies and Heats that are generally seen on all occasions when any Point is to be carry'd by majority of Voices, will be found in the Management *before*, and at the time of these Determinations: only perhaps with this difference, that they may be the greater on this occasion, becaule of the Importance Men are naturally apt to judge to belong to every thing which themselves think becoming the Worship of God. Whether this *Author* allows to *Women* any Right of voting in this *Case*, (as I am inform'd somewhat equivalent to this is granted them in many of our separate Congregations) I know not. If not, I think they may justly complain of their being

being depriv'd of that *Right* which according to his way of arguing must belong to all Creatures capable of Religious Worship, and be as contented to be concluded in such matters by their *Public Governors*, as by the *Votes* of their *Neighbours*, and *Relations*. But if this *Liberty* be allow'd to *them* likewise, some new *Questions*, and *Difficulties* may be started.

It is an easy matter to answer to all this, that these Inconveniences, and evil Consequences *ought* not to happen; that it is the Duty of Men to bear with one another's differences in Religious Worship; and the like. But alas! This is not the *Question*; but whether it be not likely thus to be. In *Theory* it signifieth little what a Man saith. He may may make what *Ecclesiastical Utopias* He pleaseth, and indulge his own peculiar Genius, and Judgment to the utmost. But in all Proposals, and Schemes which we draw up in order to be reduc'd to Practice, we must suppose the World what it *is*, not what it *ought* to be; the same Ignorance, the same Superstition, the same Zeal, the same Resentments, the same Bigottry, the same every thing which we have found hitherto amongst *Christians*: and we must propose (like good *Physicians*) not merely what is absolutely good in itself, but what is so with respect to the Prejudices, Tempers, and

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Constitutions, we know, and are sure to be amongst us. And the want of this piece of *Prudence* is alone sufficient to overthrow any *Scheme*, tho' never so good, never so perfect in itself.

Thirdly, I must observe that as this *Scheme* hath no Advantage (with respect to the *Scrupulous*) which the present *Establishment* hath not as just a title to; and is likely to be accompany'd with Circumstances, and Consequences as bad, if not much worse than what are seen to belong to *that*; so likewise is it liable to some of the chief, and most terrible of those *Objections* which have been with the greatest Zeal urged against the present *Establishment*. Let us put the Case, that the *Major* part of a *Neighbourhood* agree upon the use of a *Liturgy* at the time of the *Celebration* of the *Lord's Supper*: a Privilege which I suppose this *Author* will not deny to any of his *Congregations*, at least for their *ordinary* way of *Worship*, because he is ready to comply with *this*, should it be prescrib'd even by the *Bishops*. Now,

1. The same *Invective* may be made against this, which hath been made against such a Power in *Bishops*. For I see not but that this is as manifestly making exclusive *Terms of Communion*; as manifestly an *Encroachment* upon *Christ's* Regal Power; as mani-

manifestly a Confinement of that which *Christ* hath left free; as what is complain'd of in the present *Establishment*. This doth as effectually exclude the *Scrupulous* from communicating in that Congregation in which they have as great a Right to communicate as their *Neighbours*; and consequently is as much a confining to one sort of *Christians* what their common Master hath left open to all: It is as truly an Addition to *Christ's* Institution who left it without such an Incumbrance; and consequently is equally an Usurpation, and Invasion of that Authority which he only is said to enjoy. To say that the *Scrupulous* may go to another Congregation more to their Mind, is to say nothing that removes the present Difficulty. For according to this *Author* himself, They have a Right to be admitted in this very Congregation upon the naked Terms of *Christ* himself: and why should they either put themselves to great Inconveniences by hunting after other Congregations more agreeable to themselves; or by giving up their own Right encourage an imposing Spirit, and Ecclesiastical Tyranny in those who have no Authority for what they do? To do this for the sake of the good of the Church, and the peace of the Neighbourhood, I confess I should think Glorious, according to the notion of Glory, and Honour laid down in the Gospel. But this

this *Author* hath utterly precluded the *Scraps* from this method of proceeding: which leads me to observe,

2. That as the same *Objections* lie against this Power which he hath lodged in his *Congregations*, which have been made against the like in *Bishops*; so the same Arguments prove it unlawful to comply with the Prescription of the *Major* part of a *Congregation*, or *Neighbourhood*, which have been used against *Compliance* with the present *Establishment*. I have observ'd already that whilst the Scruples of the Persons above-mention'd remain, they ought to insist upon their *Right* to be admitted into that particular *Congregation* which hath out-voted them, upon the *Terms* of the *Gospel*: and not to give it up to an imposing, and usurping Spirit. I now add, that should their Scruples be remov'd with respect to the material lawfulness of the *Liturgy* agreed upon they are still oblig'd by this *Author's* Principles not to comply so far as to use constantly the *Form* agreed upon by others. For how do they know how many other *Impositions* they may bring upon themselves, and Neighbours at this rate? How can they answer the giving countenance to the least Additions to Christ's Institutions? Their *Compliance* would be an acknowledgment of *Authority* in the major part of this *Congregation* to make such an Agreement: and how could they

they acknowledge this without giving up all Right in themselves to be admitted upon other Terms? Shall they give up this Right for the sake of *Peace*? No. *Peace* is indeed a good thing; but such a *Compliance* tends to Slavery, and to the encouragement of *Church-Tyranny*: and *Peace* is not to be purchas'd at so dear a Price. Thus, I say, might this Cause be argu'd upon this *Author's* Principles; and the same *Objections* brought against *Compliance* under his *Scheme* which he hath brought against *Compliance* with the *Establish'd Method*; and so a perpetual Foundation laid of Quarrels, and Animosities amongst *Neighbours*. Add to this,

3. That the same *Objection* may be drawn from *Rom. 14.* against his method of proceeding with scrupulous Persons, which hath been alleged against the *Established Church*. For what is it that, according to this *Author*, that *Chapter* enjoins? Is it not that the *Scrupulous* shall be receiv'd to *Communion*? And shall any *Minister*, or any of these *Independent Congregations* dare to refuse the receiving any Christian to *Communion*? And instead of receiving those whom *St. Paul* orders to be receiv'd, send them away to other distant *Congregations*? How doth this answer his Intention, which was to assert the *Right* of such Persons to be admitted in this particular *Congregation*? But I have before spoken of this; and shall not

at present urge it any farther. And what shall we now say if those very *Objections* which have been urg'd by this *Author*, with so much Vehemence, and peculiar Zeal, against the *Established Method*, are found to be against that *Scheme* which he is setting up in opposition to it? We must conclude either that there cannot be any particular *Scheme* invented which will be wholly free from what this *Author* calls *Unscriptural Additions*; or that till such a *Scheme* be found, we may very well adhere to the *Established Church*: and also that it doth not become Men to object *Unscriptural Additions* to the *Church*, and at the same time advance a new *scheme*, in which they must, as far as appears, necessarily admit them.

Fourthly, I must observe that this new *scheme* is an entire departure from the Principles, and Professions of those *Dissenting Ministers*, whose Cause in a peculiar manner this *Author* hath undertaken to defend; as far as we can judge from the public Declarations hitherto made in their Names. That they were for an *Establishment* of a very different Nature from that of this *Author* is very evident. That they judged the Right of determining Ceremonies in Worship to be in the *Civil Magistrate*, this very Person in this *Introduction* contends, p. 46. when citing their Words,

Words, in which they declare that as to Ceremonies they were willing to be determined by Authority. He adds, in the Civil Authority as appears from all their Papers. So that they acknowledged the Authority of the Civil Magistrate in determining some Circumstantial of Religious Worship: which single Point makes an essential difference between the Scheme, and this new one, which is wholly founded on the Right of every particular Congregation to determine its own Circumstantial; and on the denial of any Right in any sort of Governors to do it for them. I mention this not as if I thought it a good Argument absolutely consider'd against the justice and goodness of this Scheme; but in order to shew the Reader the peculiar abilities of the Writer, at once to defend the Cause of the Ejected Ministers, and to propose such a Scheme as is as little agreeable to their main Cause as to that of the Established Church. Nay, I think there is reason to judge that the Best of them would sooner have chosen the continuance of the Present Establishment than the alteration of it into such an one as is here contriv'd. For tho' this Author may say that their main Point was to destroy all Impositions and Unscriptural Additions; yet I think it manifest that their main Point was to procure an Establishment much more different from his Scheme, than from the present Constitution.

Lastly

Lastly, I shall only observe farther the fruitlessnes of proposing such *Schemes* as this to a *Nation* in which there is an *Establishment* of many Years continuance, quietly submitted to by the major part of it, without any Apprehensions of their own *Ecclesiastical Slavery*, above that of their *Dissenting Brethren*. To propose the *Amendment* of some Particulars in the present *Establishment*, in order to the making it more perfect, is what cannot well be complain'd of. But to propose a *Scheme* which cannot be admitted without the entire Destruction, and total Abolition of the whole present *Constitution*, can end in no good, as I know of: unless it be a good to the *Christian Church*, that the Brains of its Members should be perpetually distracted with new Projects; and they tempted to destroy a good, and tolerable Constitution without the least likelihood of establishing a better in the room of it, or of effecting any thing but the Confusion, and Disorder of the whole Nation: For that certainly would be the end of any Endeavours to establish such a *Scheme* as this *Author* hath contriv'd. Is it proposed in order to any attempt to the introducing it into the Nation? I fear the *Protestant Religion*, and all that is good amongst us, would feel the fatal effects of such an Attempt. Is it not proposed with any hope of

ever seeing it settled? For what end then are Mens Heads disturb'd with such *Schemes*, and these propos'd after such a manner as if *Compliance* with any other Methods were not to be justify'd? How happy would it be, if the *Consequences* of such Proposals were duly consider'd before they were after such a manner offer'd to the World? But I shall not now add any more on this Subject, but proceed to the *third* general Head I propos'd in answer to Mr. Calamy's *Introduction*, viz.

III. To endeavour to shew that there is nothing advanced in this *Introduction* sufficient to prove a *Compliance* with the *Impositions* in the Church unlawful; and therefore nothing against the lawfulness of *Constant Communion* with the Church of England; and consequently nothing sufficient to justify *Moderate Nonconformity*.

I must here observe to the Reader that if this one thing can be proved, this *Introduction* were it never so perfect in other respects, is of no importance in the Cause between the Author, and myself. For the main Point to be consider'd is not whether the *Bishops* have *Authority* properly so called to make those *Prescriptions* which we are now considering; nor whether a more perfect *Scheme* than the *established* may not be found out; but whether a *Compliance* with the present *Establishment*

be, in any respect, or on any account, unlawful, or unworthy, of a *Christian*. How far Persons are oblig'd to a Compliance in such things as are not sinful for the sake of Peace this Author himself acknowledges to be a *material Enquiry*. It is so indeed; for it is upon the resolution of this *Question* entirely that our Cause depends: it being impossible to justify those whose Cause he pleads, if it be found at last that they are oblig'd to comply with the *Established Prescriptions* for the sake of Peace. This Point is discours'd from p. 73, to p. 81. of this *Introduction*, in which without doubt we may hope to meet with all the best, and strongest Reasons against such Compliance: and therefore I shall endeavour closely to follow this *Writer* in this principal part of our *Controversy*.

Before I come to the main Point, I must observe that he complains that the *Regard to Peace* should be thought to belong to one side only: in which Complaint I am not at all concern'd, who have frequently declar'd that the *Regard to Peace* belongs to all, both High, and Low, in the *Christian Church*: and particularly in the divided *State* we are in, that *Condescension* and *Compliance* is the Duty of *Superiors*, as well as *Inferiors*. But I think he himself is very much concern'd in it, who hath not proceeded one step towards a *Compliance* in this Cause, having ever insisted on

the abatements of *Superiors*, and never once preſs'd the *Compliance* of *Inferiors*. It is my Opinion that there is a Duty incumbent upon *both* in this Caſe: and that the neglect of the *one* part cannot diſengage the *other* from their Obligation to regard the common good of the *Chriſtian World*. So that it is this *Author*, (and not *I*) who hath acted ſuch a part as if all the Obligation to regard the Peace of the *Church* were on *one* ſide only. At what follows I cannot but wonder, *viz.* his declaring that to recommend Peace ſo warmly to the *Injur'd Parties* whom our Saviour hath exempted from needleſs Impoſitions, (whiſt *Superiors* will make no Condeſcensions towards it) ſavour more of the *Politician* than the *Chriſtian*: unleſs He means only this, that it muſt look like deſign in ſuch *Governors* as will not make one ſtep towards it themſelves, to preſs Peace vehemently upon others. For ſuppoſing the *Diſſenters*, the *Injur'd Parties* certainly nothing can be more agreeable to the Mind of our *Lord* himſelf than this is: who hath given no Man Authority to injure another, and ſo hath exempted all from Injuries, and yet himſelf vehemently and warmly recommends Peace to the *Injur'd Perſons*, and makes it their Indispensable Duty to be ready to condeſcend and comply, and recede from the rigor of Juſtice for the ſake of Peace, and Reconciliation, whether the *Injurious* do their Duty

or no. Besides, I think it hath been usually esteem'd the part of the *Politician* to keep up *Parties* in the World, and to this end not to preach to the *Injured* concerning the necessity of *Forgiveness*, and *Compliance*, but rather to preserve in their Minds a quick sense of the *Injuries* they have receiv'd; and on the contrary the part of a *Christian* in all *Quarrels* and *Dissensions* to persuade the *Injured*, as well as the *Injurious* not to insist upon the Terms they themselves think rigorously just, but to yield, and comply for the sake of *Peace*. Nay, This *Author* himself grants in the very next Sentence, that every *Christian* is bound to regard *Peace*, whether the Church or the State hath that regard to it which it ought to have, *yes or no*; and therefore I hope it may be a *Christian Office* to recommend it warmly to those whose Duty it is to regard it; and that the more warmly so necessary a thing is recommended, the more like *Christian* will the Recommendation be. But as warmly as I have recommended *Peace* to this *Author*, and those whom He defends, I assure him I never did it with any design of robbing them of their *Purity*, which He is pleas'd, in his excess of *Christian Charity*, to charge upon me: but will easily agree with him in what He here saith, that *Purity*, and *Holiness* are first to be regarded; and that no *Compliance*, which is either *materially*, or *circumstantially* unlawful,

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can be the Duty of a *Christian* for the sake of *Peace*, or of any other good thing.

Again, I find it alleged that *it hath a most absurd Appearance to have the Peace of the Church represented as depending upon things unprofitable*, p. 74. and as it is expressed, p. 76. *upon a Concurrence in the same Opinions, and an uniform Practice, as to Niceties and Formalities.* Now,

1. If the Peace of the Church do truly, and that very frequently, depend upon things small, inconsiderable, and unprofitable in themselves; the Representation of this cannot be *absurd*, because it answers to the Truth, and Reality of the thing represented: but the contrary Representation would indeed be absurd, because contrary to Truth. I confess it a Scandal to Christians that their mutual Love, and Charity should depend upon their agreement in any matters of small moment. But if I find it do so, I am oblig'd to give as few occasions as possible to *Uncharitableness*, by *Compliance* and *Conformity* in small matters, as far as Conscience gives me leave: and the only *Question* here is, whether it be not true in Fact, that a difference in Modes, and Circumstances of Worship, or in things even of less Consideration than these, hath been the occasion in all Ages, of great *Uncharitableness* and *Animosities* among Men of weak Heads and strong Passions.

2. That

2. That this is true in Fact I may appeal to the History of the Church in all Ages, and to our own Experience in these later Times. In St. Paul's time the Peace, and Interest of the Church depended on the mutual Compliances of *Christians* in eating or not eating particular sorts of Food, in which, consider'd in itself, there was nothing acceptable to God, but only consequentially, as it might prevent many Disorders, and many instances of Sin amongst *Christians*. This the *Apostle* thought of such Concern, that He himself represented the interest of *Christianity* as depending upon *Christians* complying with one another's Weaknesses in so trivial a matter as this, and abridging themselves of their *Liberty* for the sake of the Opinions of others, or of the Behaviour they might occasion in others, if they did not thus regulate themselves. Supposing any one should have alleged, that it had an absurd Appearance to represent the interest of *Christianity* depending on so unprofitable matters; I am apt to think that the *Apostle* would have reminded such a Person (as indeed He doth all who will make any notice of it) that it is the Duty of *Christians* to regard not only what things are in themselves, but what Consequences they are like to have; that they are to answer for the use of that *Liberty* they enjoy; and that a good *Christian* will not insist upon that

in inconsiderable matters, when it may prove the occasion of Sin in others; but will abridge himself of it, if He can by this means have any likelihood of preventing any unchristian Behaviour in any of his *Brethren*. I need not give more Instances of this. It is manifest from the Accounts we have of all Ages. And accordingly we have found that the differences of Men in *Church-Government, Discipline, and Worship*, have given the keenest edge to all the Contentions amongst our selves. And therefore however *unprofitable* this *Author* may think matters of this Nature to be in themselves, yet it is not absurd to represent the *Peace* of the *Church* as depending on an Agreement in these things, because it is matter of Fact that *Christians* have been animated against one another with a barbarous Zeal, by their Differences in these small matters. Nay,

3. The Writers of all sides have acknowledged this, that it is a great Unhappiness to *Christians* to differ in these things, because so ill an use is made by some of this Difference. The *Chief Managers* of the *Dissenting Cause* have from the beginning spoken of it with concern that they were fore'd to differ in small matters, and set up different modes of *Worship*. And what is this but to own that a great deal depends upon an Agreement in matters small, and unprofitable in

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themselves, nay upon an uniform Practice as to what this Author calls *Niceties*, and *Formalities*. All Wise Men have been sensible of this, that *the smallest Spark may kindle the greatest Fire*: and therefore I am not ashamed that I have represented the *Peace* of the Church as depending upon matters in themselves of small Importance; because I have Experience on my side, and the Observation of all considering Men to bear me out. Thus much may suffice in answer to what this Author alleges concerning the *Absurdity* of supposing the *Peace* of the Church to depend upon small and inconsiderable Matters.

I shall here beg leave to observe farther, that by consulting the *Peace* of the Church, neither I, nor any serious Person that ever mention'd it, intended merely *the not putting some Nonconformists out of humour by refusing to do what they require to be done*, as this Author slightly represents it, p. 78. contrary to the gravest of his own Predecessors, as well as to Truth; but the not giving occasion (as far as in us lies) to Passions, Hatred, Animosities, and grievous Sins, amongst the *weak*, and *violent* of all Parties, which are seen to follow upon *Different Forms* of Worship set up in opposition to one another. This is a Matter which deserves to be seriously spoken of: and since this Author himself acknowledges that the

Peace

Peace of the Church, whatever it be, ought of necessity to be regarded next to a good Conscience by all Christians, methinks it might have expected a more civil, and serious Treatment than it hath sometimes met with at his hands.

These things being premised, let us now consider what He alleges against a Compliance with the Prescriptions of the Established Church, supposing the Peace of the Church to depend upon such a Compliance, which is the main Point between us and the whole Force of what I find to this purpose dispers'd through this Introduction, I shall comprize in four Arguments.

First, I shall mention the Argument He seems to use, p. 76. to this purpose, *We are not bound to rise and go to bed, to eat and drink just at the same time, and in the same manner with our Neighbours, in order to live peaceably with them. We are not bound to laugh, and frown, to change garb and posture with the Master of the Family, in order to live peaceably in a Family. So likewise, We are not bound to be of a Mind with the Public, in every Particular, to shew ourselves peaceable Tempers.* I confess I cannot but be amazed at such Representations as this; and cannot but pity the Man who is come to such a pitch of Prejudice, as to write after this manner in this Cause. For,

I. This is just as if He should argue, We are not oblig'd to comply with the ridiculous Humours of all Men, in *all* things, therefore *Christianity* obligeth us to comply in *no* indifferent matters for the sake of the Peace, and good of the Christian Church. Or thus, We are not oblig'd to be of a Mind with the Public in every *Punctilio*; therefore we are not oblig'd to comply in *any* indifferent Practice for the sake of Peace: for this Argument supposeth the things in debate to be in themselves lawful. There may be many Reasons against *Compliance* in the Instances He mentions, as the Impossibility of it, the perpetual Uneasiness of it, the Inconsistency of it with our Health, or with our Duty to our selves in other respects, the mispent of the Time spent in them, which it is our Duty to employ better. But how can these be apply'd to such a *Compliance* as we are speaking of, supposing the Matters requir'd to be lawful? What Relation between *these*, and kneeling at the *Communion* once a Month, or procuring Sponsors, and permitting a Child to be sign'd with the sign of the Cross once perhaps in many Years? What such Relation between these two sorts of Instances, but that *Compliance* may not be a Duty in the former, and yet be a Duty in the latter? For it may be true that *Christianity* may oblige us to a *Compliance* with what we imagine

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to be *Weakness* in others, in *some* Instances, notwithstanding that it do not so oblige us in *all*, it cannot be a good Argument, to say, We are not oblig'd to comply in *all* things, therefore not in *any* thing: but the only Point is to consider whether the *Instances* of which we are now speaking, be of the number of those in which we are not oblig'd to comply: which cannot be prov'd from the present Argument without shewing that *they* are exactly parallel to the other Instances here produc'd; without shewing, for instance, that it is as absurd, and unreasonable; as impracticable, and uneasy; as inconsistent with the spending our Time well, to *kneel at the Communion* in Compliance with others; as it is to dress and undress, to eat and drink, to laugh and frown, and to regulate all such sort of Actions according to the Mod, and Custom of the most humourfome of Men. Till this be shewn, it is in all respects as good an Argument as this to say, We are not oblig'd to sing, and dance, and fiddle, and hunt, and dig, and run, and stand, as long, and as often as our *Humourfome Neighbours*; therefore we are oblig'd to comply in *nothing* for the sake of the Peace and Quiet of the *Neighbourhood*: the Weakness of which I need not stand to demonstrate. But,

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2. In order to come nearer to the *Case* before us, Suppose I liv'd in a *Family*, in which once a Week the *Master* of it requir'd all to come to *Prayer*, and to use the posture of *Kneeling* at *Prayer*. Supposing it my Opinion that He had no right to prescribe me what posture to use in that *Duty*; nay, supposing I did in my Judgment prefer *Standing*; yet when I should consider that I can lawfully kneel, and that my not *Kneeling* may probably be the occasion of an *Unchristian* Passion, and Resentment, and Quarrel, I should think myself oblig'd to comply for the sake of *Peace*, and might justly be esteem'd to have little regard to the Quiet of the *Family*, if I did not. Nor would it be any Excuse for my Behaviour, or my little regard to Peace, to allege that the *Master* of the *Family* hath as little, in making it to depend on so indifferent a matter: it being a poor alleviation of the Crime of one Person to say another is guilty of the same. Nor doth it alter the *Case* with respect to me, whether the *Master* barely recommend this *Posture*, or require it after such a manner as that I shall be excluded from *Family-Prayer*, if I do not comply. I am still oblig'd to prevent the aforesaid evil Consequence by my *Compliance*, since that doth not imply in it any acknowledgment of his *Authority* to prescribe me a *Posture* in *Prayer*. Nor would it in this *Case* be sufficient

ent for me to say to him, I am ready to shew my Good-will by praying with you once or twice a Year in this posture. For this only shews that I think the thing lawful, as a Declaration in Words would do: but removes not the occasion of Mutual Quarrels; and serves to make others think me as unreasonably humourfome in *one* way, as I think Him in another.

3. St. Paul thought himself oblig'd to comply with the weakness of other Christians so far as to confine himself to a particular Diet, rather than that the using his Liberty should prove the occasion of any Sin in them thro' their own Mistakes, and Prejudices, 1 Cor. 8. 13. Now by the Argument used by this Author He might, I think, have excus'd himself from so uneasy a thing; and have urged in his own Justification, that He was under no Obligation to conform himself to the Humours of others in such a Point. But He had another notion of *Christian Liberty*, and never pleaded that to exempt himself from regarding the Consequences of his Actions. The only Debate with Him in such Cases was, Whether this or that particular Behaviour were for the good of the *Christian Church*, or not, all things consider'd. Upon the same Principle, viz. the Interest, and good of the *Christian Church* He shews the Reasonableness of standing fast in that Liberty in which Christ

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hath left his Disciples in *one* Case; and the Reasonableness of abridging, and receding from it in *others*. Upon the same Principle he opposeth the reception of *Circumcision* amongst the *Gentiles* universally; and gives up his own Liberty in the Case of *eating Flesh*, for the sake of others. What I would remark from hence is, that it is the *Duty* of all *Christians* to consider not what *Liberty*, absolutely speaking, *Christ* hath left to his Disciples; nor what *Authority* *they* have who pretend to prescribe to *others*: but merely, whether our *Compliance* or *Non-compliance* in any particular lawful Instance be more for the Common Good; the Peace, and Interest of God's Church, and the preventing the Sins, and unchristian Behaviour of other professed *Christians*. The *Debate* between us must be entirely determin'd by this. For neither can we want of *Authority* on the one part, nor the Right to *Liberty* on the other prove against any *Compliance*, without demonstrating prejudicial to the *Church of Christ*: and supposing this Demonstration, there is no need of seeking for one single Argument more to condemn it. Into how small a *Compass* is therefore might our *Controversy* be reduced, were this regarded? For then it would come to this single *Question*, Whether *Compliance* or *Non-compliance* to the *Establish'd Prescriptions* be attended by the worst evil

evil Consequences, and the most to be guarded against by *Christians*? And this is what I have been hitherto labouring to bring it to.

4. If the *Argument* I am now considering be of any force, it must prove the unlawfulness of such a *Compliance* as this *Author* allows, as well as of that *Compliance* which He condemns. For if this *Liberty* here pleaded exempt *Christians* from all obligation to *Kneel* at the *Communion* for the sake of the good of the *Christian Church*, why not likewise from all obligation to use a *Liturgy* ordinarily prescribed, which yet this *Author* in his greatest Latitude declares a readiness to do? Why not likewise from all obligation to subscribe *Thirty Six Articles* upon the *Injunction* of the *Civil Power*? And if notwithstanding this *Argument* these *Impositions* can be submitted to, I desire a Reason why *others* may not, notwithstanding any thing contained in this *Argument*; since they are enjoined by as Competent an *Authority*, and *Compliance* to them would have at least as happy an effect upon the Good and Interest of the *Christian Church*.

Add to all this, that the same *Power* which hath established one Form of Worship, does not so rigorously require a *Compliance*, but the *Liberty*, and *Protection* are granted to all *Scrupulous Consciences*, as they have been for many Years, and are now (blessed be God) likely to be continu'd to all Posterity. This,

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should think, according to what is here said, to be a great Encouragement to Men, who think the Matters themselves lawful, to *study Compliance*; and an Inducement to them to give up the *Liberty* so much talk'd of to the Peace, and Common good of the Church, and Nation. But I hope there need no more Words under this Head to shew the Unreasonableness of arguing, that we are not oblig'd to comply in all indifferent things for the sake of Peace, and therefore not in the *Scripted Prescriptions*: for since in some things, (tho' not in all,) we are oblig'd to comply for the sake of such a Good, the *Establish'd Prescriptions* may be of the number of those things, notwithstanding any thing imply'd in this Argument to the contrary.

The Second Argument is that which I find here used, p. 77, 78. that some of the *Impositions* in the *Establish'd Church* are pure *Innovations* upon *Divine Worship*, as the *Scripture* hath settled it, plain *Additions* to one of *Christ's Sacraments*, which alter the *Institution*: and to comply in these for the sake of Peace is to renounce the *Purity* of the *Ordinances* that *Christ* hath fixed in his *Church* for the sake of Peace. The *Instances* particularly named are the Use of the *Sign of the Cross* after *Baptism*, and the Use of *Sponsors* at that Solemnity: the *Compliance* with which is here insinuated to be un-

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lawful;

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lawful; and so not to be submitted to for the sake of *Peace*. Now,

1. This alters the *Question* proposed in this part of the *Introduction* entirely: which is, How far we ought to comply with things *lawful* for the sake of the *Public Good*; not Whether we ought to comply with any thing *unlawful* on that account, which I know not to have been affirmed by any Writer of the *Establis'd Church*; and therefore cannot imagine why this *Argument* is here made use of, unless it were left otherwise what this *Author* had to say against *Compliance* might be thought to lie within too narrow a *Compass*. He hath spent his *Zeal* sufficiently against the things themselves in debate, in other parts of his *Work*: and sufficient *Replies* have been made to what He hath alleged. But however that be, the *Reader* might be left to judge of all Matters in their proper places: the only *Debate* here is concerning *Compliance* with things supposed in themselves to be *justifiable* and *lawful*. It would therefore be the best way to refer the *Reader* to what hath been said, in its proper place in *Justification* of the things here mention'd. But lest this should seem only an *Evasion*, and so prejudice the *Cause* I am maintaining, I shall here add something, in a very few Words, sufficient to counterbalance what is here urged. Let it therefore be consider'd,

2. That

2. That whatever is agreeable to the nature, and design of any *Institution* of our Lord's, may be used at the solemn Celebration of that *Institution* without the Imputation of *Adding to Christ's Institution* in any sense unlawful, or displeasing to God; especially when it is declar'd by all who use it that it is not, and ought not to be understood to belong to the *Essence*, and *Validity* of the *Institution* itself. Thus for Instance, The use of *Vocal Prayer* at the Celebration of *Baptism* is not so necessary but that *Baptism* in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, is sufficient without it; and sometimes in later times necessarily administered without it: as it probably was in the very First Days of Christianity, especially when great Numbers were baptized at a time; for we read in the Acts of the Apostles nothing to make us suspect the use of any additional Circumstances. Yet the use of *Vocal Prayer* at that Solemnity is practis'd by the Nonconforming, as well as Conforming Ministers, because it is esteem'd to be agreeable to the Nature of that *Institution*; but not because it is necessary to the *Validity*, or *Essence* of it. This shews, therefore, that it is not unlawful to use what is, strictly speaking, an *Addition to Christ's Institution*. For tho' this Author is pleas'd in another place to urge that *Injunction* of St. Paul's, *pray without ceasing*, upon this Head; yet I

cannot conceive how that toucheth this Point so far as not to make *Vocal Prayer* an addition to the *Institution of Baptism*. For neither doth the *Apostle* in that Passage speak peculiarly of *Public Prayer* in a *Christian Congregation*, but probably of *Private Prayer* when doth He speak particularly of *Vocal* and *Audible Prayer*; nor can He be supposed to imply by this Receipt that the *Administration* of *Baptism* necessarily requires *Vocal Prayer*; which if it do not imply, it cannot be to this *Writer's Purpose*. This *Author* likewise allows the Addition of some sort of *Sponsors*; which yet equally comes under the Imputation of being such an Addition to the *Institution of Christ*, as He left it, as is not necessary to the Validity of it, and equally seems to reflect upon the Imperfection of his Institution. What I would infer from hence is, that it is not a sufficient *Objection* against the Use of any thing at that Solemnity that it is an Addition to *Christ's Institution*, on that it is not necessary; which yet this *Author* seems to think sufficient, but that it is an Addition of such a Nature as is not agreeable to the design of the Institution, and takes off from the acceptableness of the *Office* to God. This is a very distinct Point from the other; and in order to shew that this cannot be prov'd of the *Prescriptions* here mention'd, I have the following Observations to propose.

is proper, and agreeable to the nature, and design of *Infant-Baptism* that there should be something in the Office appropriated to that purpose, by which the *Infants* should know when they are come to years of Discretion that they are oblig'd, by the Covenant made in their names at *Baptism*, themselves to believe in *Jesus Christ*, and to live suitably to such a Faith; or otherwise not to expect any Benefit from their *Baptism*. Now whatever small Impropriety there may be in some Expressions used, yet since this is declar'd to be all intended in that part of the Office of *Sponsors* so much cavil'd at, both by the Church in the *Public Catechism*, and by the *Principal Defenders* of the Cause of Conformity, it is extremely unaccountable that any Persons should rather resolve to fix a stranger and harder Interpretation of their own upon this, than acquiesce in such *Declarations*. At least there is fair Leave given to all to interpret this Matter thus; and consequently nothing in this impos'd upon them to use, or to permit to be used, but what is agreeable to the *Christian Religion*, and to the end of *Infant-Baptism*. 2. Nor is it improper, or disagreeable to the nature of this Institution, after the person is Baptiz'd, to declare him a *Christian*, and under the Obligations of a *Christian*, whether this be done by Words only, or by other sort of Signs only, or by Words, and Signs

whose Intention is declar'd sufficiently by Words join'd to them at the same time. Accordingly after the *Baptism* is compleatly over, it is not disagreeable to the *Institution*, to declare the Person so baptiz'd to be a *Christian*, and as such to be under all the Obligations of the *Christian* Profession, by signing him with the sign of the Cross, and declaring at the same time that the using that Ceremony is to this purpose, and to this only. This is all that is, or ever was intended by the use of this Ceremony, before which the Baptism of the Person is declared by the Public Acts of the Church to be sufficient and valid. To say therefore that this looks as if *Baptism* were not compleat without it, when both those who conform, and those who dissent universally believe and acknowledge it to be so, is strangely unreasonable. To reject it on this account, or because it is an unnecessary Addition to the *Institution*, is to cast the same Reflexion upon any Prayer, or *Thanksgiving*, which is equally an Addition, and equally implies that the *Baptism* already perform'd is not valid without it. And to say that it is an Addition so disagreeable to the nature of this *Institution*, as that it cannot fitly be used in it, is to say something wholly distinct from the present *Objection*, and what I verily believe cannot be prov'd, without putting such an *Interpretation* upon it as those who

prescribe and use it do utterly disclaim; a Practice indeed which hath been very much us'd in this Controversy, but I think not very agreeable to Minds dispos'd to Unity and Agreement. Let it not therefore be again said by this zealous *Author*, that to persuade Christians to submit to the *use of Sponsors*, and of the *Cross*, in the *Celebration of Baptism*, is to persuade them to renounce the *Purity of Christ's Ordinance*; till He can prove that the *use of these Two Prescriptions* destroys the *Purity of the Ordinance*; a Point which I should think it would better become him not to insist upon, as for the sake of the *Protestant Church* establish'd amongst us, so for the sake of *Those* whom He sometimes glories to follow. In the mean while it is some Satisfaction that when such sort of *Charges* are to be brought as prove a *single Compliance* as unlawful as a *Constant* one, Recourse is had to this *Office*; and no such Charge brought against the *Ordinary Offices* of our *Church*, on which our *Controversy* chiefly turns, and in which all *Christians* amongst us are concern'd. In these I hope I may say He himself acknowledges that there are no *Additions destructive of the Purity of Christ's Institution*, unless He would be suppos'd to hold it lawful ever to renounce that *Purity* by complying with what destroys it: which would effectually take away all force from that *Objection* of his

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which I have been now considering. But then He makes use of other *Arguments* against a *Constant Compliance* even in the ordinary Offices of our Church, which I must now proceed to examine.

The *Third Argument* of those which I can discover in this *Introduction* against such a *Compliance* as I have been pressing is this, which is very frequently in the Mouth of this *Author*, and particularly insisted on p. 74. *If a Compliance with some things be requisite for the sake of Peace, who can say, where we shall stop? Must we comply with all things not sinful for Peace sake? What if Ministers were oblig'd to preach with an Helmet on, to read always with Spectacles, to come to Church on Crutches? What if the Romish Ceremonies in Baptism, in solemn Festivals, in Consecration of Churches, in Exorcising, &c. should be insisted on? Must all who will not comply be thought unpeaceable? Or if the Obligation reacheth to some things only, it is hard to fix Limits, and to give Reasons for them when we have done.*

1. The first Answer I shall make to this wild Reasoning shall be only to draw it up in the Form of a *Syllogism*, in which the force of it will the more plainly appear. *The Obligation to regard the Peace of the Church doth not extend to all possible Instances in which Governors may require our Compliance: therefore it extends*

to no Instances at all. If this be the Conclusion this Writer would draw, I desire to know what means his own Acknowledgment, that all Christians are oblig'd to regard it next to their own Purity; since this again destroys all such Obligation. If this be not the Conclusion He intends, all this Argument signifieth nothing to the purpose. For if notwithstanding this there lies an Obligation upon Christians to comply in some things, the scrupled Prescriptions may be of that Number for ought any thing here said to the contrary. Again, it is hard to fix the just Limits of this Obligation; or to point out plainly to what Bounds it extends: therefore what? Therefore there is no such Obligation at all to comply in any Instances. This must be his Inference, if He design any thing by this Argument against Compliance. And I appeal to all the World of Christians if all the Duties of the Gospel may not be argued away after the same manner. For instance, It is hard to determine exactly what a Proportion of my Estate I am oblig'd to bestow in Charity; therefore I am not oblig'd to bestow any part of it. It is hard to fix the exact Bounds of our obligation to Temperance; therefore there is no such Obligation. It is hard to fix the exact measures of Justice in all manner of Trade, and Commerce; therefore there is no Obligation to it in any Instances. It is hard to fix the Bounds of Mutual

tual Condescension amongst Christians; therefore there is no such Duty. But if this *Author* disclaim the *Conclusion* I have fixed upon his *Reasoning*, as I hope He doth, then it is visible to Persons of the lowest Capacity that there is nothing in it against the Lawfulness or Becomingness of submitting to the *Establish'd Prescriptions* for the sake of *Peace*. For if it do not follow from it that *Compliance* in all indifferent Instances is unlawful, it may be true, notwithstanding any thing here alleged, that *Compliance* in the *disputed Instances* is both lawful, and our Duty. It may be true that I am not oblig'd to submit to an *Hundred Ceremonies* for the sake of *Peace*; yet may be oblig'd, notwithstanding *u. s.*, to submit to *Three*. It may be true that I am not oblig'd to submit to a number of indecent, and ridiculous Observances; yet I may be oblig'd, notwithstanding this, to submit to *Three* which are not so. But,

2. The same *Argument* will equally conclude against the *Compliance* of this *Author* and his *Brethren* with the *Subscription* requir'd of them by the *Civil Power*. For they are no more oblig'd to subscribe all *Articles* which may be impos'd, than they are to comply with all *Ceremonies* which may be impos'd: and it is as hard to settle the exact number of *Articles* they are oblig'd to *subscribe*, as it is the exact number of *Ceremonies* they are oblig'd to com-

ply with : and consequently, according to this Argument, they are not oblig'd to subscribe any Articles ; since the Magistrate hath no Authority, according to this Author, to interpose in this Case. If, therefore, notwithstanding this Objection, they think it reasonably to comply so far as to subscribe *Thirty Six Articles* ; it may likewise be reasonable to comply so far as to submit to *Three Ceremonies*. The same may be said with respect to other Instances of Compliance, which have been propos'd in the name of the *Dissenting Ministers* : but the Application is so easy that need not insist upon it.

3. With the leave, therefore, of this Author I must say it again, that it is sufficient Satisfaction to this Question, Where must we stop in this Compliance in indifferent Circumstances of Worship for the sake of Peace ? To answer, When our Imposers prescribe vain, senseless, indecent, ridiculous Ceremonies ; or a troublesome number of any sort to burthen the Public Worship. This Author replies in his factious way, A pleasant Fancy ! As if any Imposers of common sense would own the Ceremonies they introduce to be vain, or indecent, &c ! I am the less surprized at this, because I have found him so often using the same artful way of making his Adversary ridiculous, viz. first fixing a Sense upon my Words which He thinks He can easily put out of Countenance ; and

and then making himself pleasant with it. This I have reason to complain of here: for I know it's impossible for him to have been led by any of my Words to think me so void of common Sense as to make the *Imposers* Judges in this Case. When I say that we are oblig'd not to comply when any thing *insal* is impos'd, would not any fair *Disputant* understand this of things which we our selves (not the *Imposers*) think *insal*? So when I say that when *ridiculous* and *burthensome* Ceremonies are impos'd, we may do with reason complain of *Governors* going beyond their Authority, would not any one who was willing to understand me, interpret this of Ceremonies which *we* our selves, not the *Imposers*, think so? Or would any one, who is sincerely dispos'd to set things in the best light, invent another Sense which cannot without the greatest Absurdity have been intended? I confess, tho' this *Author* hath taken no particular notice of it, that with respect to the point of Compliance with *imposed* Ceremonies, I have not expressed myself so clearly in that Page (P. I. p. 83.) to which He here refers, as I could wish. For I there use such Words as may be understood by some to signify that Compliance may be a Duty, let never so many and odd Ceremonies (not unlawful in themselves) be imposed: tho' indeed a *Candid Reader* will see from my very Words that

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peak this only of Ceremonies of which the world that can be said is, that they had better not have been commanded. But I take this Opportunity to declare it to be my Judgment, that there may be such a *Complication* of Circumstances, and Ceremonies in Worship (which cannot be said to be in themselves sinful) so destructive of the simplicity of Christian Devotion; so repugnant to the end of the several Offices of it, as that it may not be fitting for Christians to comply with them on that account. I wish indeed it were in my Power to determine exactly the due number, and quality of Ceremonies to be comply'd with as to satisfy every body concern'd. But this is not the only Case in which we are forc'd to come short. The like cannot be done with respect to any other of the most momentous points of Evangelical Obedience. We can do no more than lay down a general Rule, which must leave to the Conscience of Men, as in the sight of God to apply to themselves in particular Instances. For thus it hath pleased God, even in the most material Points, to leave something to the Judgments and Consciences of Men to determine for themselves, that He may judge them according to their behaviour in such Determinations, as it is truly and thoroughly sincere, and upright, or drawn aside by Passion, or Interest, or any worldly or carnal Motive. It appears therefore

fore that I make the People themselves Judges concerning the things impos'd upon them: which wholly destroys all the *Sarcasms* of this *Author*, and returns them upon his own weak, and groundless Mistake. I shall only add that it is impossible, by the *Rule* I have now laid down, for any to judge *Compliance* with the *Established Prescriptions* for the sake of Peace to be unbecoming a *Christian*. *Kneeling* at the *Communion* is the only *Ceremony* in which all *Christians* are concern'd: and no one can think this, supposing it lawful, to be either *indecent*, or *burthensome*. Nor can the two other disputed *Impositions*, in which generally they only are concern'd who have *Children*, add to the number so as to make it intolerable. The first of these I am chiefly concern'd about, because it belongs to that part of *Worship* in which all *Christians* ought to bear a part: but if any of these *Characters* can be fixed upon that *Ceremony*, it will be prov'd unfit ever to comply with it, as well as always. For upon this Supposition it is as unbecoming a *Christian* to comply with it once a Year for the sake of *Charity*, as once a Month; whereas the Persons I am concern'd with will not contend against it thus far. The Result of what I have said is this, that the true way of arguing against a *Compliance* with our *Prescriptions* relating to the *Worship* of God is not, to say, We may as well

be requir'd to comply with numberleſs, vain, indecent Ceremonies, as with the *present*, which is false; or that it is hard to fix the exact measures of *Compliance*, which yet cannot dissolve our Obligation to it in some Instances; but to prove that the particular Instances in which we are call'd upon to *comply*, are such as it is unbecoming a *Christian* to comply with, either for their *Number*, or *Quality*. Nothing but this can take off our Obligation to the great Duty of *Condescension*, and *Compliance*; and therefore the Argument I am now considering is of no force for that purpose.

Fourthly, The Argument against *Compliance* which seems to weigh most with this Author, is the most frequently in his Mouth, and to me thought most sufficient of itself to defend his Cause is taken from that Encouragement *Compliance* would give to Men of Imposing Spirits to add more and more Impositions, and from the Unlawfulness of giving such an Encouragement. This single evil Consequence of *Compliance* He thinks sufficient to counterbalance the good Consequences of it, and as such opposes it, p. 52. and again insists upon it, p. 77. and agreeably to this, p. 79. alleges that Separation is necessary, as it is a disowning of Power which is unwarrantably pretended to, and flatly sinful when it is exercised in the making

making *Unnecessary Prescriptions*; and as it is the only way of disowning it which can be of any Significancy. This way of Arguing deserves seriously to be consider'd: and that the Tendency of it may be fully seen, I offer these following Observations.

1. Supposing a Compliance to encourage an *Imposing Temper* in some Men, this is not a sufficient Reason against it. Our Saviour hath made Compliance and Condescension, Placability and Forgiveness, the Duty of Christians, tho' these Virtues may be said to encourage some Men in their persecuting the Innocent with Injuries: nor did He think it enough to forbid any Man to be injurious to his Neighbour; but likewise lays it upon the injured Person, not always to insist upon his own right, but to be ready to yield, comply, and forgive for the sake of the Peace, and Quiet of Humane Society. Compliance in the ordinary use of a Liturgy, to which this Author still professes a readiness, encourageth an *imposing Spirit*: for according to himself no one hath right to prescribe even that ordinary use of one yet He thinks this lawful, and expedient otherwise surely He would not declare his Inclination to comply with it. Compliance in the subscribing *Thirty Six* Articles, upon the injunction of the Civil Magistrate who hath not, according to this Author, Authority to enjoin this, is an encouragment of an *Imposing*

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Spirit: and as this *Author* loves to argue sometimes, how doth He know but that this *Compliance* may tempt those in Power to impose Three Hundred *Articles* upon Him and his *Brethren*? Yet is this accounted lawful, and fitting to be submitted to, notwithstanding that the want of *Authority* in the *Imposers*, and the fear of more *Impositions* pleads as strongly against *Compliance* in this *Case*, as in the *scrupled Instances*. It is manifest, That in the *Case* of this *Subscription* they determine themselves merely by the nature of the *Propositions* to be subscribed to, and very easily swallow all the *Difficulties* they urge in other *Cases*, of the *Danger* and *Unlawfulness* of giving any encouragement to the *Encroachments* of an *Imposing Power*: which methinks should make them the more ready to own that the true *Reasons* for *Non-compliance* in the *Case* before us must not be taken from the want of *Authority* in *Imposers*, or from the fear of encouraging an *Imposing Spirit*, which will equally conclude against all *Compliance*, but merely from the nature of the *Ceremonies* actually prescribed. But to refuse *Compliance* in one *Case* against which these *Objections* lie, and to practise it without reluctance in another against which they equally lie, is not consistent, but strangely unaccountable; and overthrows the whole force of these *Objections* by shewing that *Compliance* may be lawful,

ful, and honourable, tho' the *Imposers* have no *Authority*, and should be encourag'd by it to proceed in their *Imposing Humour*; and that it is time enough to think of *Non-Compliance* when the *Impositions* themselves are such either in *Quality*, or *Number*, or both, as cannot fitly be comply'd with by *Christians*: which is the Point I am labouring to bring our Controversy to. I can easily apprehend that a *Compliance* may be unlawful, when every one of the Instances in which it is requir'd may be said to be such as is not in itself, as to the matter of it, sinful; and therefore am not concern'd in what this *Author* urges for the Proof of this. But then I think there can be no Proof of this as to the Case before us, but by proving the *Impositions* *Establish'd* such as destroy the end, or corrupt the Simplicity, or by their Number intolerably burthen the Celebration of God's Worship; not by arguing from such *Topics* as we see equally destroy the lawfulness of *Compliance* in those Instances in which this *Author* and his *Followers* are willing to practise it themselves. Last of all Supposing that a *Compliance* would give encouragement to some *Imposing Tempers*, I appeal to the whole world of *Christians*, if it be not a greater Evil to have any hand in giving occasion to that *unchristian* Behaviour which is founded upon our *Religious Differences*, than to practise a *Compliance*, and

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Condescension from which some may take occasion to do their Parts towards the prescribing more *Ceremonies* in the *Church*. The bad Consequences of the *former* method are present, and apparent: the bad Consequences of the *latter* are not to come till those Persons have carry'd their Point: nor are they to be equall'd to what we have seen to follow from the *former*, upon any probable Supposition. And again, I appeal to all who understand the *Gospel*, whether it be not much more agreeable to the genius of it, to practise *Forbearance*, and *Compliance* till the very time comes, when we find Men so encourag'd by it as actually to impose *Ceremonies* inconsistent with the end, or nature of *Religion*, and *God's* Worship, and then to refuse a farther *Compliance*: whether this I say be not much more agreeable to the genius of the *Gospel*, than to refuse *Compliance* at present not because the *Ceremonies* now impos'd are not fit to be comply'd with; (for this *Argument* supposeth the contrary;) but because our *Compliance* may occasion the introducing such *Ceremonies* and *Forms* in times to come, as it may not be fit for *Christians* to comply with. The thing I am sure of, that in this method there can be no such thing as *Mutual Compliance* in the most indifferent matters for the sake of *Peace*, because this *Objection* lies equal against every *Instance* of it, that the rece-

ding from our suppos'd *Right* in *one Case* (tho' never so trivial) will influence those in Power to invade in it *others*, in which it will not be fit for us to recede from it: a way of reasoning rather becoming the Resentments of the *Children of this World*, than the meek dispositions of the *Children of Light*, and the Subjects of the *Prince of Peace*.

2. All that I have said hitherto hath been upon supposition that *Compliance* with the *scrupled Impositions* might give encouragement to some Men to attempt the introducing more and more into *God's Worship*: but now I must observe that it is rather probable that *Compliance* would have a greater force to prevent this, than *Non-compliance* hath. By *Compliance* here I do not mean a servile *Submission* to every thing that can be impos'd, but a *Compliance* join'd with the free use of our own Judgments, and a modest and peaceable Representation concerning any thing which we apprehend may in process of time be of evil consequence to the *Christian Church*. Such *Compliance*, I say, would very probably have a better effect to the preventing the burthen of more *Impositions*, than such an *Opposition* hath been made on the part of those who have run into open *Separation*. In the place they would by remaining in the *Church* have a greater Opportunity, and Capacity preventing what they so much fear, the

they can have whilst they are *out* of it. In the *next* place, This Method would certainly have much less of *Provocation*, and *Offence* in it, than which nothing hath more hinder'd all Accommodation: for *Opposition*, and *Non-compliance* on *one* side more generally beget a zealous *Opposition*, and *Non-compliance* on the *other*, than *Condescension*, and a yielding *Temper*, when it is manifested to be free from *Baseness*, and *Servility*. And in my Judgment, this is the fundamental Reason for the general Rule of *Compliance* laid down in the *Gospel*, because it doth, generally speaking, tend more effectually to break the *Violences*, and quell the *Passions* of *others*, as well as to prevent our *own*, than the contrary Practice would do. Besides, It is observable that even at the *Restoration*, when it was much more in the *Will*, and *Power* of *Church-men* than ever it is likely to be again, there was not one single *Ceremony* added to the *Church-Worship*: which Observation as it is very much to their Honour, so it is sufficient to silence this mighty fear of more *Ceremonies*. It is not what one Man, or a few have said in their Passion, that is to determine the Reasonableness of this Fear; but what is in the *Will*, and *Power* of a *Majority* of *Ruling Clergy*. And as *Experience* hath shewn that they have not hitherto once publicly attempted to introduce more *Ceremonies*, so is it much

more unlikely than ever that such an Attempt should be successful, either in the present, or future times: and is not this sufficient to take away the force of the present *Objection*, wholly founded upon the fear of encouraging the Imposition of more *Ceremonies*? For if even as things stand at present there doth not appear to be *Will*, and *Power* enough to do it: much less will there be when a number of Men *comply* who will be *against* all such Attempts. I shall only add that the remainder of any Degree of what is here call'd the *Imposing Spirit*, as far as I can judge, is wholly kept alive, and vigorous by the method some have taken to oppose it: and would in all probability have been made much less zealous than it is by such a *Compliance* as I have been speaking of.

3. To the *latter* part of the *Argument* now before me I reply, that supposing it *flatly sinful* in *Governors* to exercise their Power in making what you call *unnecessary Prescriptions*; it may, notwithstanding this, be as *flatly sinful* in others to refuse *Compliance* in such *Prescriptions* as cannot be said to destroy the end, or acceptableness of *Divine Worship*: as it may be *flatly sinful* in any Man to invade my *Right* in a matter of no great Importance; and may likewise be *flatly sinful* in me not to recede from this *Right* for the sake of *Peace*, and the *Public Good*. Nor will it be any Excuse for

my

my Sin, that another is likewise guilty of Sin. Let it be therefore that *Governors* sin in making *unnecessary Prescriptions*; it may be equally true, that others sin in not complying with them: because the *Duty* of *Inferiors* doth not merely respect their *Governors*; but they are bound to regard the good of the whole *Church of Christ*, and to take that lawful Method which most conduceth to the encrease of *Peace* and *Charity*, whether their *Governors* have done their *Duty*, or no: and may be oblig'd to give up their *Right* for the sake of the *Public Good*, tho' not for the sake of their *Governors*.

4. Last of all, I offer this to *Consideration*, that *Compliance* in the *Case* we are now considering is perfectly consistent with the disowning the *Authority* of those who impose these *Ceremonies* in this *Imposition*, and therefore not necessary to that *Purpose*. As the receding from a *Right* invaded by an injurious *Neighbour* doth not imply in it an acknowledgment of his *Right* to invade it: As the *constant*, or *ordinary* use of a *Liturgy*, (one of which this *Author* and his *Brethren* are ready to comply with,) doth not, according to themselves, imply in it an acknowledgment of any *Authority* in *Church-Governors* to impose it: As their *subscribing Thirty Six Articles* (which to some judicious Persons seems a greater grievance than the using *Thirty Six Ceremo-*

nies in Worship) doth not imply in it an acknowledgment of the *Authority* of the Civil Power to impose this upon them; so neither doth Compliance with the *Established Prescriptions* imply in it an acknowledgment of the *Authority* of any in Power to fix and appoint them. The *Clergy* themselves are not oblig'd to assent to such an *Authority* in that sense in which it hath been oppos'd, or in any other but that which I have mention'd in the beginning of this *Reply*. As for the *Laity*, there is not the least Obligation upon them in this Point: which is fully sufficient for the present Purpose. And how the *stiffness* of some *Conformists* can alter this matter, is as hard to understand as it is to apprehend that a *Neighbour's* persisting to injure me, can render my Forgiveness an acknowledgment of his *Right*, and *Authority* to injure me. But notwithstanding this, it seems the *Cause* must not be deserted, because *Separation* is the only way of disowning this *Authority* which can be of any *Significancy*. It is, I acknowledge, the most flagrant way of disowning it; but, as I have shewn already, not so effectual to prevent the Evil feared, nor so free from such evil Consequences as a good *Christian* would rejoyce to prevent, as the other Method I have propos'd and consequently not of so much *Significancy* in the account of the *Gospel*, or of the Law of *Prudence*.

Thus

Thus have I impartially consider'd every *Objection* I can find in this *Introduction* against the lawfulness of *Compliance* with the present *Ecclesiastical Establishment*: and this chiefly with respect to the *Laitie*; because if there be nothing here said sufficient to keep *them* from *Compliance*, this is fully sufficient to my present Purpose, the Justification of *Constant Conformity* to the *Church of England*.

But I find something here added (p. 82, 83.) concerning *Occasional* and *Constant Communion* which I must take a little notice of, if I may be so bold without being represented again by this artful Writer as running into the common cry upon these *Topics*. He knows very well that I never charg'd the Practice of *Occasional Conformity* as *Hypocrisy*, but have publicly vindicated it from that Imputation: and therefore I am not at all concern'd in what He saith on this Head. Nor do I argue that we must of necessity do all such things for Peace sake *always*, which we may lawfully do *sometimes*. Nor do I draw any Argument from an *Occasional Compliance* with our *Impositions*, but what I should equally draw from a verbal Concession that *Compliance* is *materially lawful*. And what I say is, that the *Impositions* in our *Church* are of that Nature, and so little burthensome, that they may honourably be constantly comply'd with for the sake of *Public Good* by all those *Christians* who think

think them, in the *matter* of them, *lawful*. Now there is a very good reason why *Occasional Communion* is not the only thing which may be expected from such Persons in this Case, because *that* prevents none of the evil Consequences of *Separation*, and removes not the occasion of the *Unchristian Behaviour* amongst us. The only end propos'd by it is to testify *Charity*, i.e. that they who practise it believe what they comply with to be in it self *lawful*, which cures no more Evils, and remedies no more Inconveniences, than a verbal Declaration to that purpose would do; and by the Confession of this *Author* himself heretofore hath added Fuel to the heat of many on all sides who cannot understand it. Whereas the chief *End Christians* ought to have in their eye, after their own Salvation is secur'd, is to prevent all *unchristian Behaviour* in others, and to lessen as much as in them lies the occasions of *Hatred*, and *Malice*, or any other Sin amongst Men. It is not enough to be free our selves from these Vices: It is not enough to be persuaded that there is no just occasion given for the Mistakes and *Violence* of others: but we must, in Instances of no great Consideration, recede from our own *Right*, and retrench our own *Liberty* for the sake even of a single *Christian*, much more of a great Number; even for fear of giving occasion to their ill Behaviour, much more when

we are assured by Experience that we do so. But (it is here added) for any to say that if I am with them at all I must be with them always, is as if a Man should tell me that if I can once, to shew myself sociable, and to shew that I don't count the Food poisonous, eat of a certain dish of Meat which some are extremely fond of; I must have it at every Meal, or I shall shew myself an unpeaceable and disorderly Man. So likewise, (p. 80.) a Man may lawfully hear a weak Preacher: but to oblige himself to hear no other would be sinfully to ensnare himself. A Child may comply with his Parents in taking some Diversion: but to spend the greatest part of his time in it cannot be excusable on any Pretence. St. Paul comply'd with Circumcision in a particular instance: but had He done it always, He had subverted the Gospel. I have already said what is sufficient to shew the little force of such arguing in the case before us. But because I would not seem to overlook any thing in this *Introduction* (on which I am as willing as the Author of it that the Issue of our Controversy should be put) I have the following Observations to offer.

1. If this Author would not, for the sake of preventing the *unchristian Behaviour* of others, be confin'd in his eating; I must tell him that he is not so good-natur'd, and compliant, as Paul was, who declar'd something very contrary to this, and often ventur'd the health of

of his Body for the sake of his *weak Brethren*. Indeed the only *Rule*, as I have already observ'd, which *He* went by in such *Cases* as this, was the interest of the *Church*, and the good of his *Fellow-Christians*. And therefore before *He* be brought in as an instance against *Compliance*, it must be prov'd that *Compliance* is not so much for the honour of the *Gospel*, and the good of other *Christians*, as *Non-compliance* is. Otherwise, his *Example* can signify nothing. For if *Compliance* tends more to the good of the *Church* than *Non-compliance*, *He* would himself certainly practise it, were *He* now alive. *He* therefore that would prove any thing from *St. Paul's Example* against *Compliance*, must first prove the contrary to this: and then there needs not his *Example* against it; for *He* never was against any *Compliance* but what was against the *Interest* of *Christianity*, and against such a *Compliance* we are all oblig'd to declare both in Words and Practice.

2. The Instances here given by this *Author* are not at all *parallel* to the *Case* in debate and therefore cannot prove any thing against *Compliance* with the *Established Prescription*. To eat of the same *Dish* always is a much more wearisome and burthenfome thing, than to kneel once a Month at the *Communion*, or to permit a Child to be Baptiz'd after the *Establish'd* manner once in many Years perhaps.

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Now tho' He who should refuse to eat of the same Food every day for the sake of Peace, might possibly elcape the censure of Unpeaceablenels; yet He who would not comply so far as to eat of the same Dish (which He acknowledges *wholsome*) once a Month, or once a Year, for the sake of preventing any *unchristian Behaviour* in his Brethren, seems to me to have but little sense of that *Charity* which fired St. Paul's Breast, and govern'd his Actions. So that tho' a Man be not oblig'd in one Case, it doth not follow but that He may be oblig'd in another very different from it. Nor is there any thing in the *Compliance* we are speaking of which answers to the being confin'd always to the hearing of a weak Preacher: tho', supposing there were, I must confess it to be my Opinion that a *Christian* who submits to this Inconvenience merely out of a *Charitable Principle*, for fear of being the occasion of any thing prejudicial to the *Christian Church*, shall not lose his Reward for such a *Condescension*. That He *sinfully ensnares himself* is not true, or that He endangers his own Salvation by it: for there is otherwise Provision enough for that, and He is not under the least Obligation to be influenced by the Preacher any farther than as He appears to speak Truth, of which He is here suppos'd a capable Judge. Much less is there any thing in *Conformity* which bears any relation to a
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Child's complying so far with his *Parents* as to spend the greatest part of his time in idle Diversions: for this is in such sense so *sinful* as that no *Circumstances* can make it otherwise. *Almighty God* hath made the contrary the Duty of every Man: but He hath not forbid *Kneeling* at the *Communion* once a Month, or submitting to such Prescriptions as hinder not the regard to our own Salvation, or break not in upon our *Duty* in any respect. A *Child* cannot lawfully mispend his Time, upon the Command of a *Parent*, any more than He can lawfully Swear, or Steal upon the Command of his *Parent*: and how therefore can this come up to the Point before us? I should have a very mean Opinion of the *Dutifulness*, or good *Temper* of a *Child*, who should not oblige his Father so far as at his Command to spend such a portion of Time in recreating himself, as cannot hinder his Duty, or necessary regard to his own *Salvation*, tho' He should suppose this matter not to come within the verge of *Paternal Authority*: and yet this may be much more troublesome than the Case before us. Least of all is *St. Paul's Non-compliance* in things which, in their Consequences, would have subverted the *Christian Church*, an Argument against *Compliance* in matters which would have no such effect; but we have reason to think the quite contrary in the Opinion of the same

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Apostle, who esteems the removing the occasions of *Uncharitable*, and *Unchristian Behaviour* amongst *Christians* a glorious way of edifying, and building up the *Church of Christ*. To sum up what hath been said, It may not be the Duty of a *Christian* to comply so far as to eat of the same Dish *always*: but yet it may be his Duty to comply so far as to eat of it once a Week, when all the *Neighbourhood* meet to enjoy one another's Company, and when the refusal of such a *Compliance* may be the occasion of great Breaches, and Hatred amongst those He accounts *weak Brethren*. A Man may not perhaps be oblig'd to comply so far as to engage himself to hear none but a *weak Preacher*: yet may He be oblig'd so far to comply as to do things which bear no proportion to such an Inconvenience as this. A Child may not sin against God under pretense of *Compliance* with a *Parent*, or do that which He thinks unlawful and inconsistent with his own Salvation: but yet a *Christian* may be oblig'd to comply with others in what is not in itself unlawful, and inconsistent with his own salvation. In this *Instance* it is the *thing* itself, whether commanded by the *Parent*, or no, which is unlawful for the *Child* to chuse to do. In the *Case* before us, we are speaking of the compliance with *Impositions*, which are suppos'd in the present Debate to be in themselves of that Nature that a *Christian* might lawfully chuse

chuse them, and practise them, were they not impos'd. But,

3. What need there any more Words, when it is so evident that if these Instances prove any thing against *Compliance*, they touch those very *Instances* in which this *Author* and his *Brethren* allow *Compliance* to be lawful, and worthy of a *Christian*? For instance, If they prove against the necessity of *Compliance* with the present *Establishment*, they must likewise prove the same with respect to *Compliance* with the constant use of an *Imposed Liturgy*; nay with the ordinary use of it: to the former of which a *Compliance* hath been heretofore offer'd in the name of two Thirds of the *Dissenters* in *England*, and to the latter is even now promis'd in the *Introduction* before us. Wherefore if the *Arguments* before-mention'd signify any thing, they must lie harder against *Compliance* in this Case, than in *Kneeling* once a Month or permitting the sign of the *Cross* to be used after *Baptism*. Nay, How hard will the *Arguments* lie against *Compliance* in all Instances which are necessary to the joining all parts of *Public Worship* (concerning which our main Dispute is) against such a *Compliance*, I say, for the space of a whole Year which yet hath been allow'd of, if not revised, by some of the greatest of this *Author's* *Brethren*? For if these *Arguments* prove more extended *Compliance* to be either inco-

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sistent with the Duty of a *Christian* to himself, or so intolerably burthensome as not to be supported, or a sinful ensnaring of himself, or a *Subversion* of the *Christian Church*; I fear it will be hard to exempt an *annual Compliance* from the same guilt, or to make it eligible to a *Christian* on any account. - But if they do not, they prove nothing against a *Constant Compliance* with the *Established Prescriptions*: but leave it still true, that they may honourably be comply'd with by all *Christians* for the sake of the *Public Good*, and the Peace and Interest of the *Christian Church*. This particular instance of *Compliance* allow'd by Great Men of the *Separation* I the rather mention, that I may shew this *Author* how indifferent a matter some very considerable Men of his own side have thought a *Compliance* little differing from that against which He hath open'd as violently as if it would be the scandal of *Christianity*, and the ruin of the *Gospel*; and that I may move *Him* to consider whether more modest Accusations would not better become him in a *Cause* in which so great a *Latitude* hath been allow'd of by his *Brethren*.

I have one thing more to offer peculiar to this *Author* himself, and that is, that if these *Instances* prove any thing against *Compliance* with the *Established Church*, they will leave no room for the *Constant Compliance* of any Persons for the sake of the Peace of the Neighbourhood,

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bourhood, were his own *Scheme* reduc'd to Practice. For I cannot see how any *Compliance* can be honourable upon this *Author's* Principles, but such an one as is indeed no *Compliance* at all; a submitting to what we do in all respects approve of our selves, *i. e.* adoining nothing for the sake of any body but of our selves.

It remains only now that some notice be taken of the *Motion* this *Author* makes, p. 91. at the *End* of this *Introduction*. To which I have this to reply in general, that were all the things He mentions capable of a strict Demonstration as true as any in the *Mathematics*, it would be a very great Absurdity to put so important a *Cause* upon this Issue, because so few of those many *Christians* whose Concern it is, are capable of understanding such a *Demonstration* of many of these Points. But to free the *Reader* from the Cloud that this *Conclusion* of the *Introduction* may draw over his Mind, I shall be more particular.

1. It is plain, therefore, from what hath been already said in this *Reply*, that there is no need of proving that an Authority was left by Christ to any Persons to make unnecessary Prescriptions: because *Compliance* may be worthy of a Christian, notwithstanding the *Imposers* have no Authority. This I have prov'd as well from the *Concessions* and *Practice* of this *Author* and his *Brethren*, as from the *Reason* of the Thing itself: so that, God be thanked,

thanked, it is not so bad with the *Christian Church* that we are oblig'd in *Conscience* to wait for *Peace* and *Unity* till all that vast variety of *Opinions* concerning the extent of the *Authority* left, and the *Persons* to whom it is left, be reduc'd to one *Common*, and *Universal Judgment*. This is the *Subject* of the 91, and 92 *Pages*.

2. It is demanded how far *Compliance* is to go, and where to stop. I have already shewn that it is no *Argument* against *Compliance* in any particular *Case* that we cannot fix the exact *Bounds* of it, any more than it is against the *Practise* of any other *Christian Virtue*. That it doth not extend to all possible *Instances* in themselves lawful I agree with this *Author*. But I think it very certain that there is no such *Virtue* as *Compliance* in the *Case* now before us, if it be not to extend itself to all such *Instances* as are consistent with the *Ends* of *Religion*, and the nature of *God's Worship*: and together with this I remark that there is but one *Ceremony*, viz. *Kneeling* at the *Communion*, which is annexed to the *Public Worship* of our *Church* in which the *Laitie* are concern'd, and this a posture very agreeable to *Prayer* which is then always used. I extend it therefore to such things as are not only lawful, but of that Nature that *Compliance* with them is more worthy of a *Christian*, all things consider'd, than the refusal of it; which I take to answer to what the *Apostle*

meant by *Expedient* in that *Text* here quoted, *All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient*: which words, if they can be supposed of any concern to our present Cause, may justly be interpreted to signify amongst other things that a Christian is oblig'd to restrain the *Liberty* which He supposeth *Christ* to have left him, consider'd absolutely by himself, and to give it up in many Instances when the good of the *Church* requires it.

3. As for the Judgment what is so lawful, as to be fit to be submitted to, it must lie entirely in the breast of the Persons who are to practise *Compliance*. They are under no Obligation as I know of, but to take the greatest Care possible to judge rightly: Nor do I attempt any thing in what I have written but to assist them in that Judgment by removing some Prejudices out of their way. If they judge that they have more reasons to think any thing *prescribed* unlawful, than to think it lawful; it is my Opinion that no Command of others, nor any other Consideration can bear them out in complying with it. But I am not now concerned with any who doubt of this, but only with such as think all the *Circumstances* of the ordinary parts of *Public Worship* such, as that *Compliance* with them is sometimes both *lawful*, and *expedient*.

4. As for the *Argument* I use for such a *Compliance* as I am pressing, I think it founded on the Will of God, and the most affecting possible to a *Christian* Heart next to that taken from our own Innocence, viz. that it would remove some of the *Occasions* of *Uncharitableness*, and *Unchristian Behaviour* from amongst our *Brethren*; and therefore is more worthy of a *Christian* than the contrary, which increaseth the occasion of Sin amongst *Christians*. This sad Consequence all on all sides must answer for, who do not their Parts towards the preventing it. The Chief Arguments against a *Compliance* are *Consequential*: and therefore I wonder this *Author* should seem to find fault with such. Those which He hath alleged I have impartially consider'd; and so I hope have answer'd his Demands on this Head.

Last of all, I must remind this *Author* that the Point between us is not whether a more perfect *Scheme* may not be invented than the *Established* one; or whether that which He hath favour'd the World with, be not more eligible. I hope He himself would not venture the overturning the present Settlement, upon a prospect of settling his peculiar *Form*: and if He do not intend this by proposing it, as I have too much *Charity* for him to think He doth, it is plain the only *Question* is, Whether *Compliance* with the present *Established*

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Church be worthy of a *Christian* or no. I will not put so great a Task upon *Him*, as He is willing to put upon *Us*: and tho' I might with equal grace put it upon Him to demonstrate so clearly as to convince all Persons concerned, that all the Claims here pointed at, as on the side of the *Church*, have no ground; and that his *Scheme* only is founded on *Reason*, and *Scripture*; yet, in return to all the Particulars He hath mentioned, I desire but one thing to be clearly made out on *his* side, and that is that, taking the World as it is, *Non-Conformity* is more for the honour of God, and of *Christianity*; more for the Edification of the *Church*; more worthy, on any account, of a *Disciple* of *Jesus Christ*, than *Conformity* to the *Established Church*. Let this one thing be cleared, there is no need of having recourse to other Arguments; I may venture to promise in the Name of many others, as well as my own, that we will heartily join with *Him* in the Prosecution of the same *Cause*.

Thus have I honestly, and impartially consider'd what is alleged in this *Introduction*; not omitting any Particular in which *I*, or the *Cause* I have undertaken, can possibly be suppos'd to be concerned. I have fairly declared that I put the whole *Cause* upon this, agreeably to what Mr. *Calamy* seems to expect of me. I have here at the end pointed out the one single Point on which our *Debate* doth so entirely

entirely depend, that all others are superfluous, and insignificant: and on this I fix. If He see fit to reply seriously to what I have said upon *this* Head, without doubt what He advanceth will have its due weight: but if He have recourse to any other *Topics*, and wander from *this*, I think such a Behaviour may justly be look'd upon as a designed avoiding of the only main Point between us, and accordingly be neglected, without any Crime.

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Postscript,

*Relating to the Third Part of
Mr. Calamy's Defense of
Moderate Non-conformity.*

I Have in *this Treatise*, and in a *Former Defense* impartially consider'd, and particularly answer'd to, every thing materially alleged by Mr. *Calamy* in the *First*, and *Second Parts* of his *Defense of Moderate Non-conformity*. There remains still the *Third Part* of his *Defense* to which it may be thought necessary to reply: concerning which I have the following Observations to make.

1. It is so full of Abuses, and palpable Mistakes, and Misrepresentations, that I would desire nothing of any Reader but that He would be so just as to lay before him, at the time He reads it, what I have written in the *Second Part* of the *Reasonableness of Conformity* to which it is designed as an Answer: and then

then I should not fear the evil Effect either of his unworthy *Reflexions*, or of his strange *Misrepresentations*. It is on the account of these that I cannot return him the *Complement* He is pleas'd to make me, that if He write again He will *bring the Art of Chicagerie to Perfection*, (which is an *inn* Art;) but must needs say, that if He go on as He hath begun, He is in danger of bringing a much worse *Art* to Perfection, *viz.* that of *Misrepresentation*, and *Unjust Insinuation*.

2. This *Author* himself hath now put the whole of our *Cause* upon what He hath advanced in the *Introduction* to the *Second Part* of his *Defense*, to which I have made a distinct *Reply* in the foregoing Papers; and am willing to have the whole Matter brought to the same Point. Upon this account, neither He, nor any one else can blame me if I avoid a long, and tedious *Diversion* to what must be chiefly *Personal*: since all that concerns the *Causes* of *Conformity*, and *Non-conformity* in their present State, He himself professeth to have comprised in that *Introduction*.

3. That I may not be thought wholly without reason to overlook this *Third Part* of his *Defense*, I observe that the *Second Part* of the *Reasonableness* of *Conformity*, to which this professeth to reply, is digested under two *Heads*: the *former* of which undertakes to answer those *Arguments* which were brought
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this *Author* for the *Ejected Ministers* continuing their *Public Ministry*; and the *second* to consider the *Arguments* proposed by Him in justification of the *Non-conformity* of the *Laity*.

As to the *former* of these I went over every *Argument* particularly by itself, and endeavour'd to shew that none of them were of any force without supposing it more for the *Glory of God*, and the *Benefit of his Church*, all things consider'd, that their *Public Ministrations* should be continu'd, than the contrary: that this was the *Point* to be proved, which, if it can be proved, I acknowledge for my part, makes these and all other *Arguments* unnecessary, and needless, being alone sufficient to justify them. And now what *Answer* do we here meet with to this? Can this be denied, or not? No, On the contrary it is acknowledged, and sometimes it is declared to be supposed under every *Argument*, and I am taxed with a *Fault* in not taking it always into the account. Upon which I take the liberty to say, that this is a plain *Alteration* of the *State* of every *Argument* from what it was at first; and that what I have said is true, that all these *Arguments*, either *without*, or *with* the proof of this one *Point* are *insignificant*, and *useless*: and consequently that this is the *sole Point* to be insisted on in order to justify the continuation of the *Public Ministrations* either of the *Past*, or *Present* Dis-

Dissenting Teachers. And whether this *one Point* be made out, or not, must, according to this *Author* himself, be determined by what is alleged in the fore-mentioned *Introduction*, and in my *Reply* to it: and so there cannot be supposed any necessity of multiplying Words in this place.

Under the *Second Principal Head* of the *Second Part* of the *Reasonableness* of *Conformity*, I went over every *Argument* by itself, which had been alleged by this *Writer* in justification of the *Non-conformity* of the *Laiety*: and endeavour'd to shew that they were not sufficient for the *Purpose* intended. Now He himself hath comprised the whole of what is sufficient for their *Justification* in his *Introduction*, and desires it may depend upon what is there said: for which reason I have chosen to make a very particular *Answer* to that, desiring that the *Cause* I have undertaken may stand or fall with what I have advanced in this *Answer*. And on this account every one must acknowledge it wholly needless for me to tire the *Reader* with *Repetitions*, and *Matters* purely *Personal* in order to vindicate my own former *Reasonings*: concerning which I freely leave the *Reader* to judge, provided He will be so just as to take my *Sense* from my own *Book*, and not from this *Author*, against the justness of whose *Representations* I think my self oblig'd to give public Notice.

After

After I have gone over all the *Arguments* in *Defense* of the *Dissenting Laity*, I come to consider the *Circumstances* which, according to this *Author*, make *Constant Communion* with the *Church Etablissement* to be unlawful: and this I do at some length from p. 180. to p. 214. This Part of the *Controversy* likewise is thrown by *Himself* into his *Introduction*, in which He insists upon those *Circumstances* which make *Constant Compliance* with our *Impositions* unlawful: and accordingly I have follow'd him in my *Reply* to it; so that there is no need in *this* place of repeating what is, at his own desire, transferred to *another*.

After this follows, in the fore-mention'd *Book*, p. 214. a *Parallel* between the *Arguings* of the *Dissenters* on one side, and some *Church-Men* on the other, against their *Compliance* with one another. This is not a matter of absolute importance in our *Cause*: and was designed to make all Persons, on all sides, sensible of the *Weakness* of some sort of *Arguings* against *Mutual Compliance*. What is said to this purpose I must particularly desire the *Reader* to read in my own Words, because this *Author* hath left out *many*, I may say, *all* the most material *Passages* in the *Representation*. He pretends to give of this matter. I cannot express myself better, or more clearly, than I have in this Point: and therefore can only appeal to the *Reader* whether
my

my *Representation* of it have been fairly answer'd, or no.

Thus have I given some account why no more particular Notice is taken of the *Third Part* of his *Defense*: and think it fully sufficient to say that I follow his own desire in putting the whole *Issue* of the *Cause*, handled in this *Third Part*, on my *Reply* to his *Introduction*.

4. If any *Persons* be resolv'd to think otherwise, I chuse rather to suffer in their Opinion, than to weary out myself, and others with needless *Repetitions*. Yet, for their Satisfaction if they will, either in private *Conversation*, or by *Letter*, or any more *public* way, point out any particular Matter, which they judge of Importance, in *this*, or any other part of Mr. *Calamy's* *Defense*, pass'd over by me; I promise that I will impartially consider it, and sincerely give them my Thoughts upon it: tho' I am not sensible that I have overlook'd one single Point, which He himself, or any of his *Friends* can think *material* in this *Cause*. Nay, Tho' I have resolv'd to trouble the World no more with Matters purely *Personal*, relating to this *Controversy*; yet I am ready to give Satisfaction to any who want it, concerning any incidental Point in the whole of what I have written: particularly as to this *Author's* accusing me of misrepresenting Mr. *Baxter's* *Concessions*

in favour of *Episcopacy* (which He hath, against plain, and positive Proof, and without the least Foundation, continu'd to do in his *Third Part*, p. 200.) I doubt not to prove to any one, except himself, that the *Mistake*, and *Misrepresentation* lieth wholly on his side.

5. Last of all, Let any one but consider what Mr. *Ollyffe* hath had occasion to observe concerning his Behaviour to Him; Let any one but read his Performance, and see with what Insolence and Contempt He often treats his *Adversaries*; with what Artifice He rather chuses to make such a false Representation of them and their Principles as may render them odious to his *Readers*, than to state their Arguments fairly, or answer them candidly; Let any one but call to mind the frequent Occasions I have found to complain of his laying such things, and such *Principles* to my charge as never once enter'd into my Thoughts; Let any one but review his whole Behaviour from the very first beginning of this *Controversy* to the last Word He hath written in it: and I dare say, I cannot be blamed if I have so much regard to my own *Quiet* as to lay aside all thoughts of having any thing to do with so *unaccountable* a *Writer* for the future; at the same time heartily forgiving him every injurious *Word*, and *Representation*, whether design'd, or not design'd.

A POSTSCRIPT.

design'd. Were I a well-wisher to his Cause, I would entreat him to alter his method of handling it: but if He be determined to go on as He hath begun, He must not wonder if He should at length raise himself up an *Adversary*, who may handle him as He deserves. For my own part, I wish *Him* well and so take leave.



F I N I S